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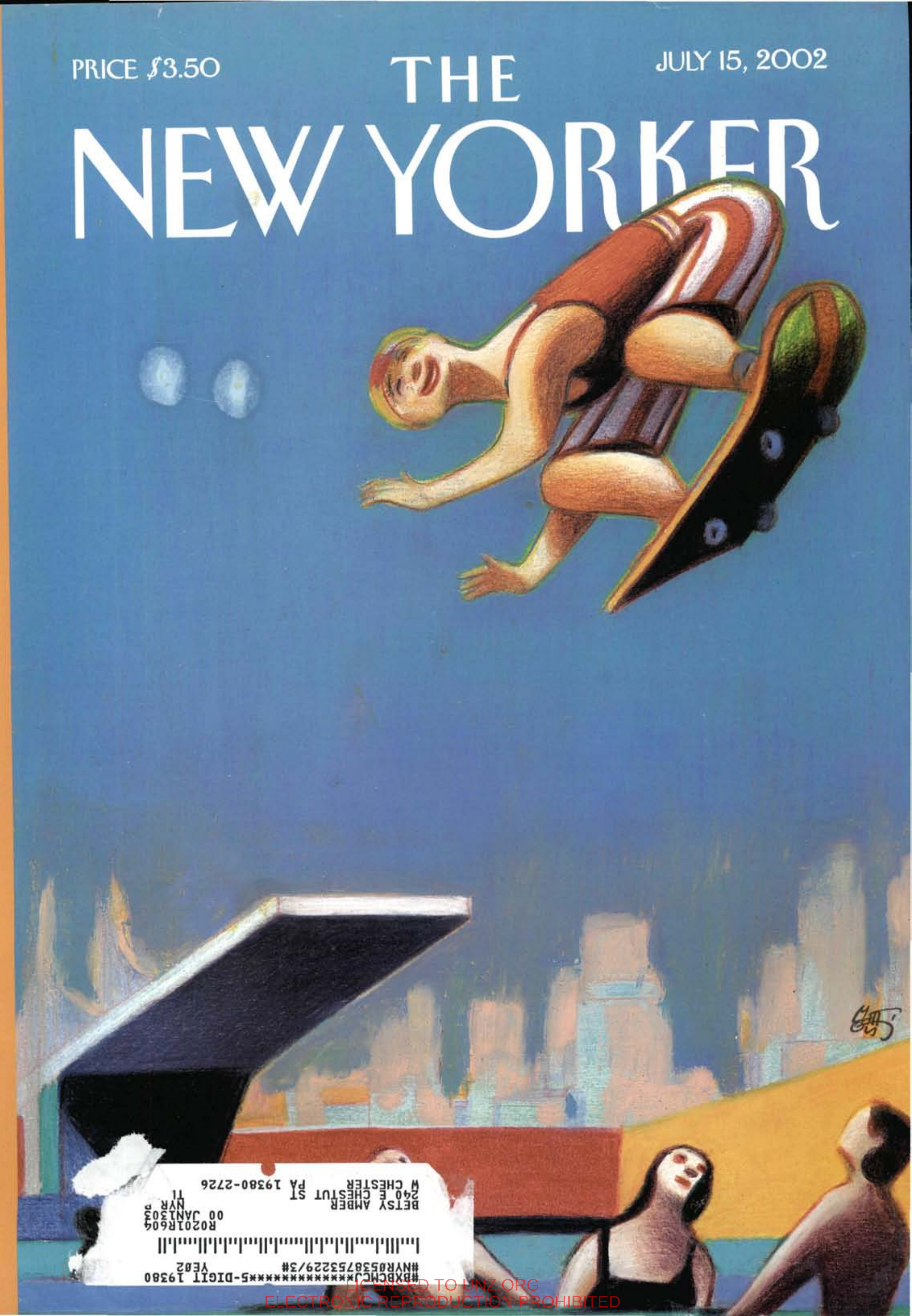
THE NEW YORKER

JULY 15, 2002



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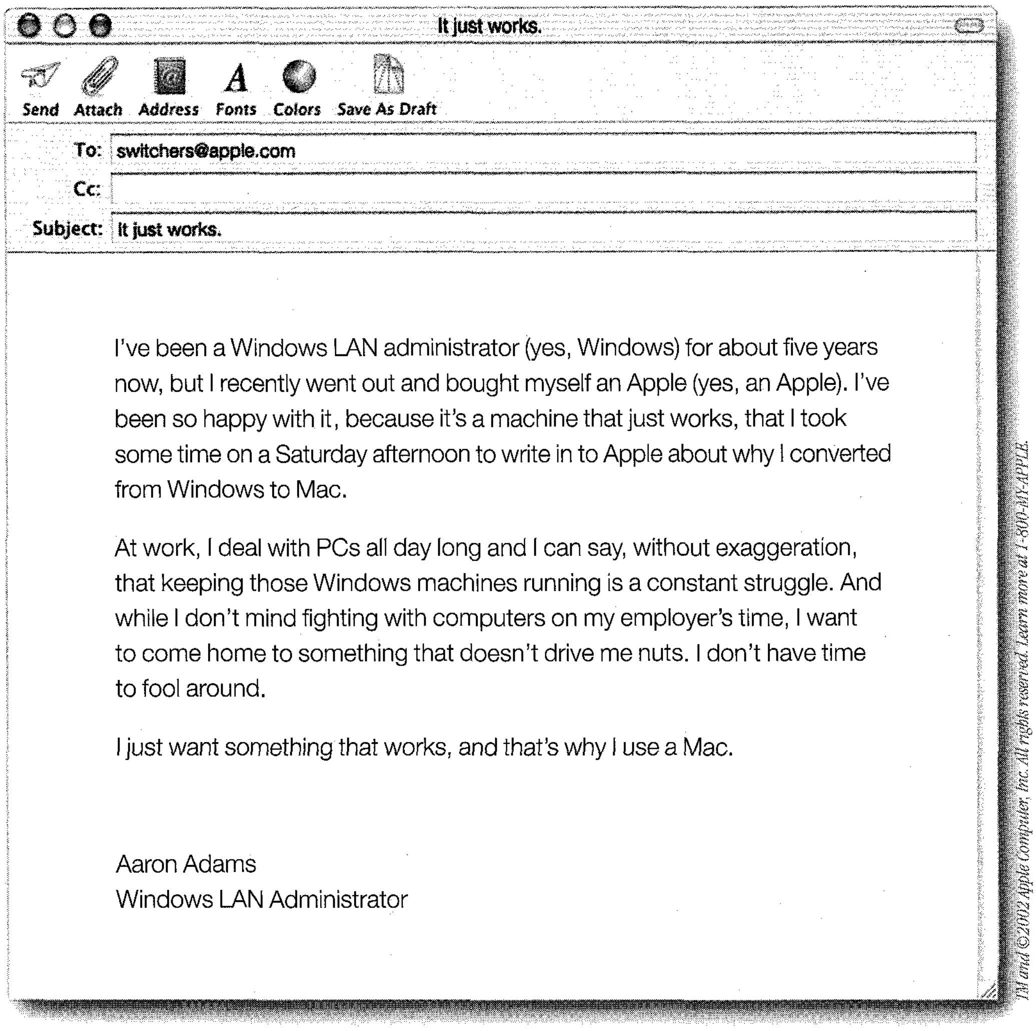

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Aaron Adams
Windows LAN Administrator

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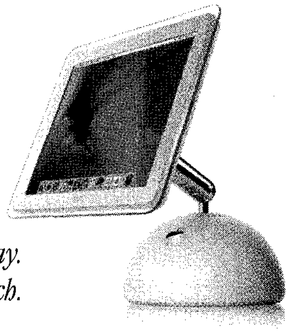

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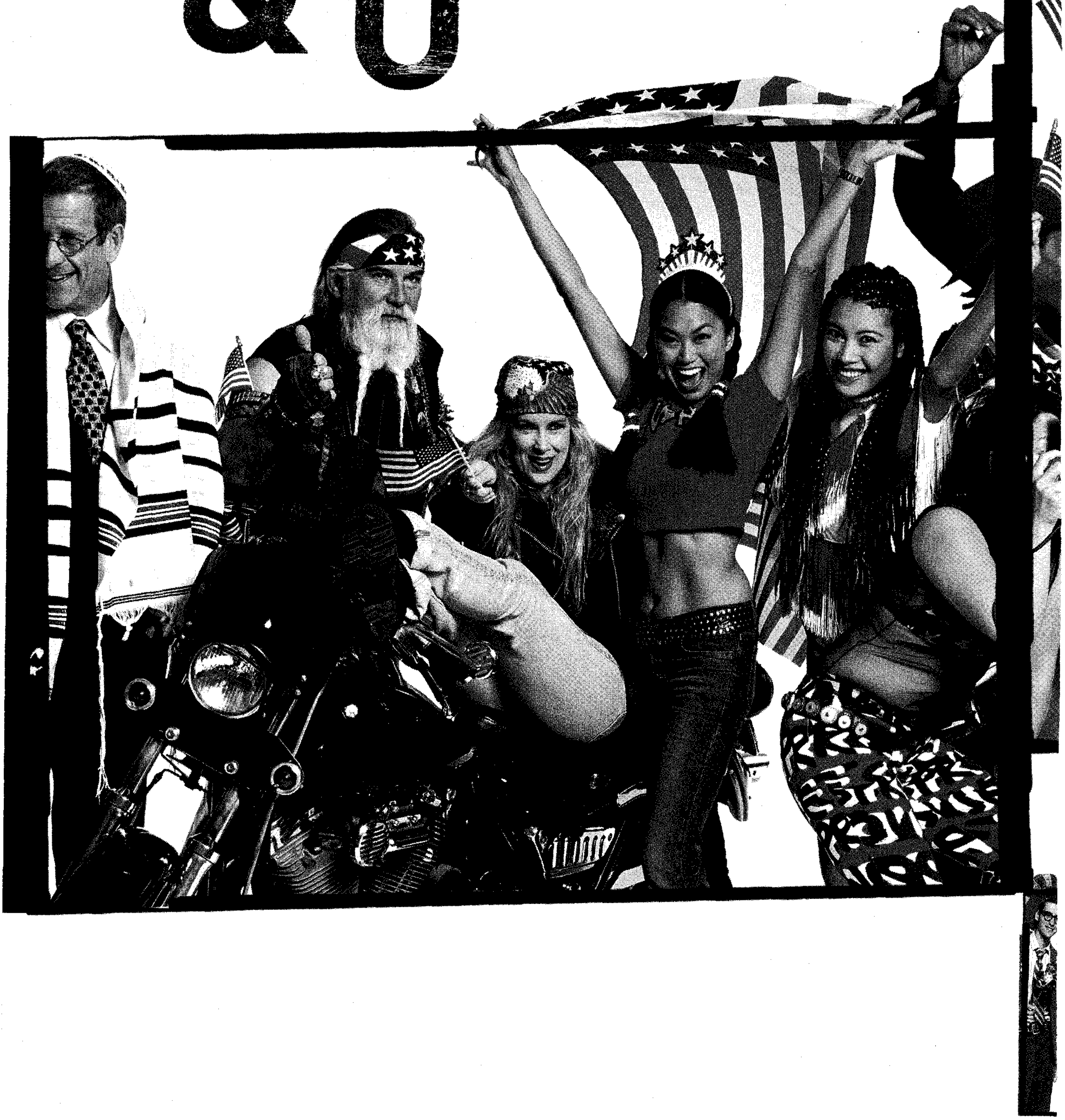

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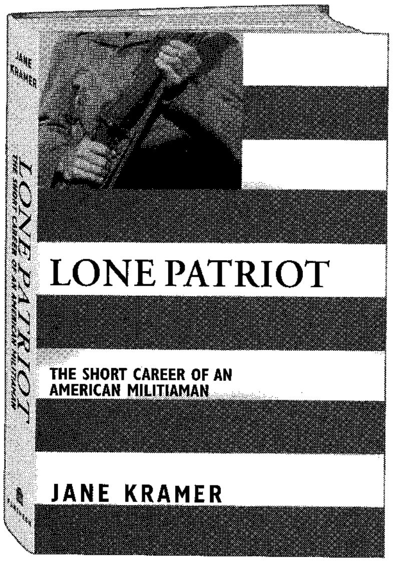
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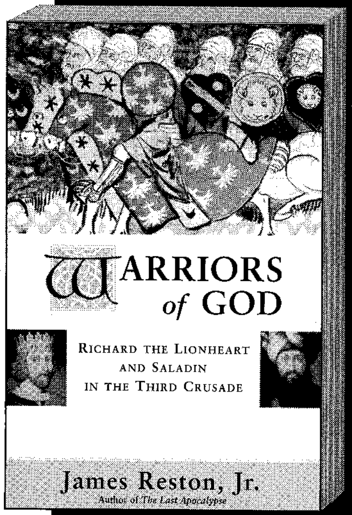
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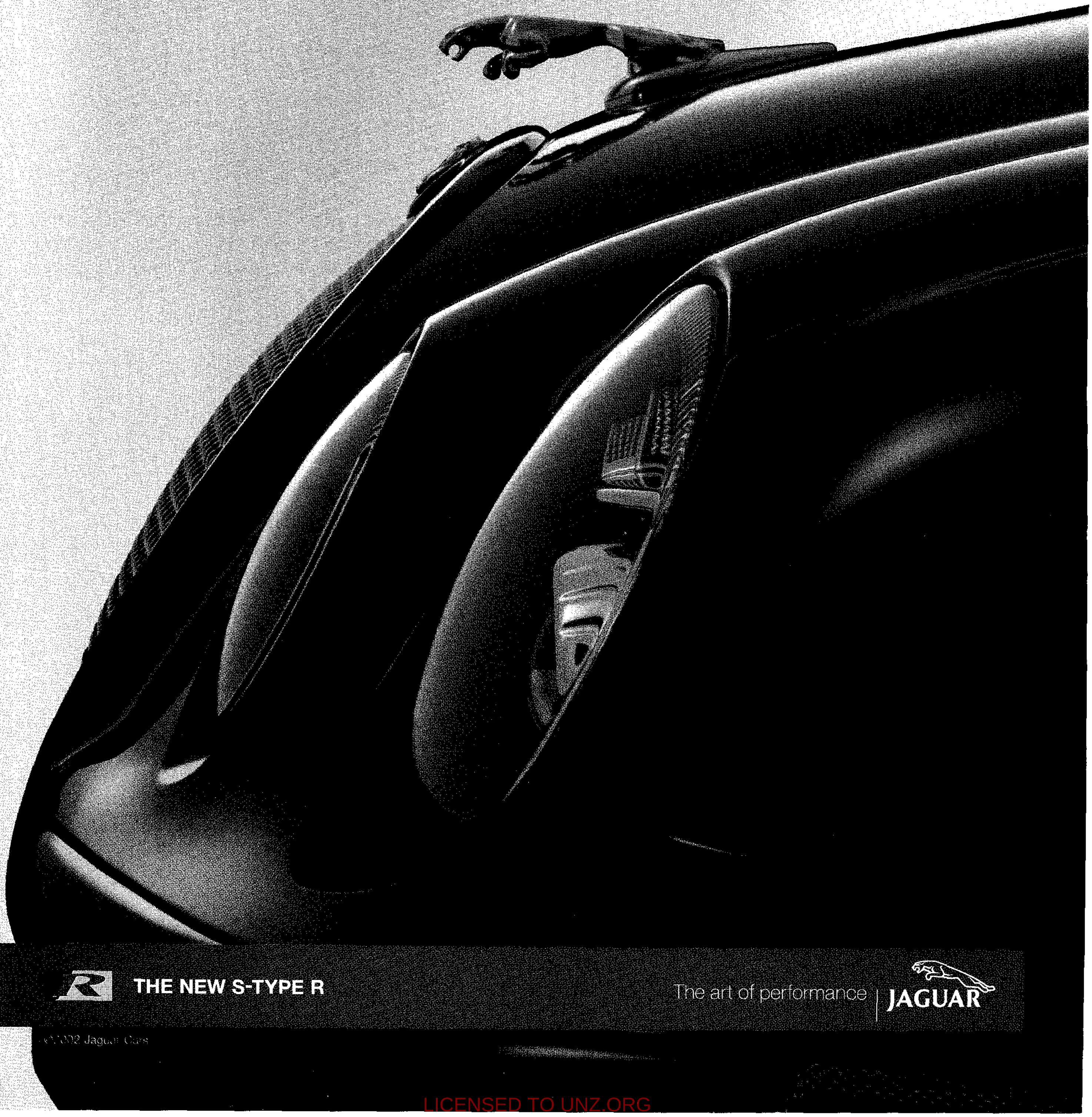

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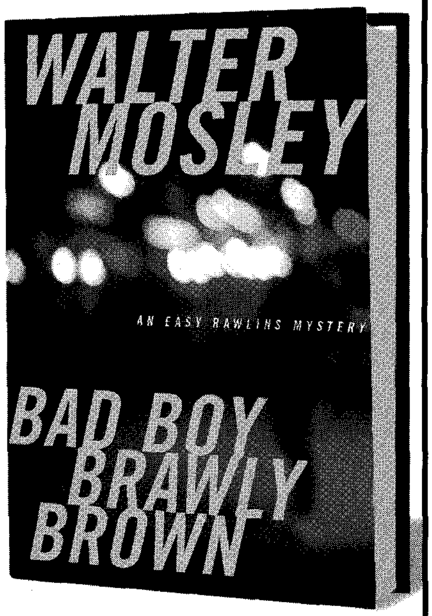

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CONTRIBUTORS

Nick Hornby ("We Are the World," p. 32) has written four books, including "Fever Pitch," a memoir about his relationship with the Arsenal Football Club. His latest novel is "How to Be Good."

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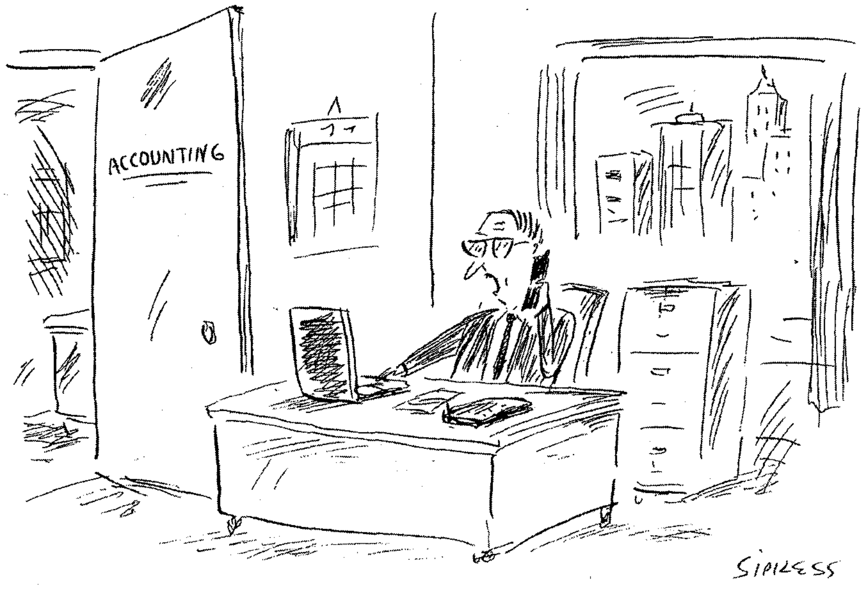
Robert Stone (Fiction, p. 68) is the author of "Bear and His Daughter" and "Damascus Gate." He will publish his seventh novel next spring.

James Surowiecki (The Financial Page, p. 31) writes a regular business column for the magazine. He is working on a book about collective decision-making.

Bruce McCall (The Back Page, p. 92) will publish a new humor collection, "All Meat Looks Like South America," later this year. ♦



"Oh, that three billion dollars."

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THE MAIL

THE FIGHT FOR KASHMIR

Hendrik Hertzberg writes that Mohandas K. Gandhi "was right about many things, including the two great historical mistakes that are the root of the current crisis" on the subcontinent: first, that India should never have been partitioned and, second, that Kashmir, "given the brutal logic of partition," should have been part of Pakistan (The Talk of the Town, June 17th & 24th). In October, 1947, however, Gandhi reportedly expressed relief at the news of Indian military airlifts to Kashmir to stop an invasion of Pakistan-sponsored Pashtun "raiders," who pillaged Kashmiri towns and villages. Pakistan may see itself as "defending the principles of self-determination and majority rule" in Kashmir, but its posture is a self-serving as well as a self-deluding one. In the part of Kashmir that Pakistan controls, no free elections have been held, and outspoken local leaders have been jailed. It's also worth recalling Pakistan's response when East Pakistan, now Bangladesh, sought self-determination: a military campaign that resulted in the deaths of countless Muslim civilians.
Jamyang Norbu
Sewanee, Tenn.

Hertzberg, in drawing a parallel between the India-Pakistan conflict and the Israeli-Palestinian one, writes that both Israel and India see themselves "as defending a larger idea of democracy." Both states are also struggling with Islamist terrorism along questionable borders created by a foreign power's partition plans. Why, then, does he see the solution for the Middle East conflict so clearly as "land for peace," but the solution regarding Kashmir as so much more complex? Why should India's decision not to reward terrorism with altered borders warrant more respect than Israel's?
Anat Hinkis
Queens, N.Y.

It is ironic that, as Hertzberg relates, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld decided to travel to South Asia to moralize about the danger of nuclear weapons, given that he has spent his career lobbying for the United States to have an ever-stronger defense, no matter the cost. How can an Administration whose message to the world—in areas from defense to the environment—has been "We can do anything we want, but you can't" succeed in the critical task of getting others to give up nuclear weapons?
Sampak P. Garg
Washington, D.C.

THE ALCHEMY OF GOLF

James Surowiecki, in his cautionary tale of Nike's failure to dominate the golf business, tells us that Callaway rose to the top because the company had technology on its side, while all Nike has is Tiger Woods: objective performance beats marketing hucksterism every time (The Talk of the Town, June 10th). Callaway succeeded without branding? This is a company whose ads feature a "mad scientist" and the gravitational dynamics of a tungsten screw, which, for no doubt scientific reasons, is embedded in the surface of the club. We experience the world through a cultural lens, never objectively. Branding works by adjusting that lens to frame not only how customers value the product but also how they experience it. Nike's failure is a rhetorical one. The company has not been able to persuade golfers, well schooled by Callaway, to look at a Big Bertha without feeling an extra ten yards coming. Branding through technology is one of the most powerful rhetorical devices marketers have—precisely because so many consumers share Surowiecki's scientistic view of the world.
Douglas B. Holt
Assistant Professor of Marketing
Harvard Business School
Boston, Mass.

•

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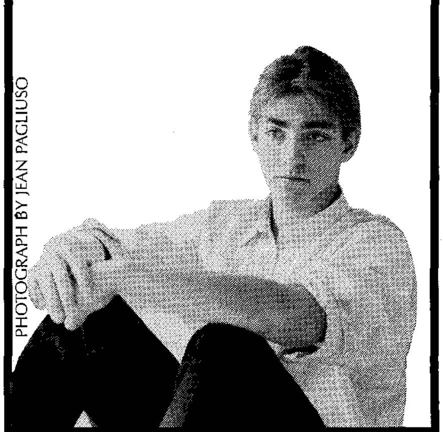

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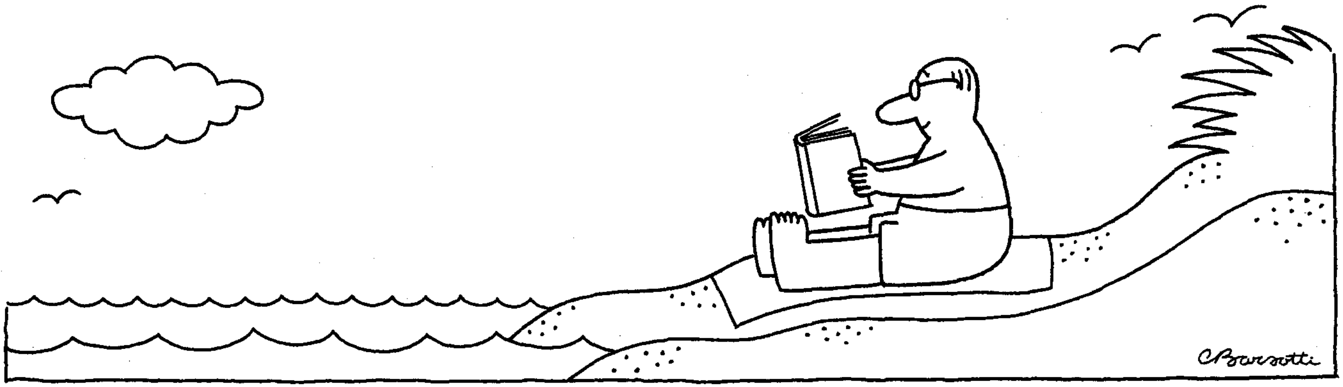

THE THEATRE
OPENINGS & PREVIEWS

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS
The Aquila Theatre Company's version of Shakespeare's play is set in the twenties in Turkey. Preview on July 10. Opens July 11 at 8. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 239-6200.)

HARLEM SONG
George C. Wolfe's latest is a musical history of Harlem show business from the nineteen-twenties to the present. In previews. (Apollo Theatre, 253 W. 125th St. 307-7171.)

I'M NOT RAPPAPORT
Judd Hirsch and Ben Vereen star in a revival of Herb Gardner's 1985 comedy. Daniel Sullivan is the director. Previews begin July 12. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

KING LEAR
Shakespeare's play, in an outdoor staging by the Classical Theatre of Harlem starring Paul Butler. In previews. (CTH Courtyard Theatre, 645 St. Nicholas Ave., at 141st St. 206-1515.)

LYNN HARRIS ON ICE
A two-woman comedy starring Lynn Harris and Betsy Fast, about a Minnesota camping trip that Harris took in December 2000. July 11-12 at 8, July 13 at 6 and 10, and July 14 at 7. Continues through July 21. (Sanford Meisner, 164 Eleventh Ave., at 22nd St. 206-1515.)

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING
The Gorilla Rep's free outdoor production of Shakespeare's comedy. Opens July 11 at 8. (Fort Tryon Park at 190th St. For more information, call 330-8086.)

TA'ZIYEH
A three-part Iranian epic drama ("Ta'ziyeh of Hor," "Children of Moslem," and "Ta'ziyeh of Imam Hussein") about the battle between Imam Hussein, grandson of the prophet Mohammed, and Caliph Yazid, in 680 A.D. July 12-16 at 8. Runs through July 21. (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. For information about tickets and schedule, call 875-5928.)

TWELFTH NIGHT
Kristen Johnston, Christopher Lloyd, Oliver Platt, Jimmy Smits, and Julia Stiles are in the New York Shakespeare Festival's only outdoor staging of the summer. Brian Kulick is the director. In previews. (Delacorte Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 539-8750.)

VERONIQUE
A recently rediscovered drama by John O'Hara, which satirizes life in Greenwich Village in the twenties. Previews July 11-13. Opens July 14 at 3. (Bank Street Theatre, 155 Bank St. 561-9635.)

VOYAGE OF THE CARCASS
Dan O'Brien's comedy is set on an iceberg during a polar expedition gone bad. Previews July 12-13. Opens July 14 at 7:30. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202.)

OPENED RECENTLY

ALL OVER
Rosemary Harris and Michael Learned lead a well-cast ensemble in the Roundabout Theatre Company's revival of Edward Albee's 1971 play about living with mortality. They portray the bitter wife and loving mistress, respectively, of a dying man of great wealth and social standing, who have come together at his deathbed—along with his dejected son and angry daughter (Patrick Garner and Pamela Nyberg), an old family friend (John Carter), and a very canny old doctor-and-nurse duo (Bill Moor and Myra Carter). Thanks to the fine performances, all the sting, humor, and sadness of Albee's view comes through: we're all inherently selfish, so loving the dying is often easier than loving the living. Emily Mann is the director. (Gramercy, 127 E. 23rd St. 307-4100.)

CAPITOL STEPS: WHEN BUSH COMES TO SHOVE
The Washington, D.C., comedy troupe returns to New York with their latest satirical revue. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

CHICAGO CITY LIMITS
The improv company presents a new revue, "Chicago City Limits' Director's Cut," which incorporates short films and videos. (Chicago City Limits Theatre, 1105 First Ave., at 61st St. 888-5233.)

ENDPAPERS
A drama by Thomas McCormack, former C.E.O. of St. Martin's Press, about the fallout that follows the retirement of the C.E.O. of a small, financially unstable publishing company. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

FOOL FOR LOVE
Tim Corcoran's precise, insightful direction is the heart of this revival of Sam Shepard's 1983 play about a misbegotten love. The evening's power lies mainly in the monologues, which are superb. (29th Street Rep, 212 W. 29th St. 206-1515. Closes July 27.)

FORTUNE'S FOOL
Turgenev's little-known 1848 play, set at a Russian country estate, stars Alan Bates as a down-on-his-luck gentleman living there and Frank Langella as his wealthy, arrogant neighbor. It becomes almost unnecessary for anyone else to be present, so completely do the two actors dominate the stage. Directed by Arthur Penn. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/15/02.) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Closes July 21.)

THE GOAT; OR, WHO IS SYLVIA?
Edward Albee's ninety-minute anecdote about a happily married, successful architect who falls in love with a goat called Sylvia. It takes all of Albee's expertise to tease this joke into an evening; but it allows Mercedes Ruehl some hilarious moments of high dudgeon as she trashes the house and her husband (Bill Pullman) for "cruising livestock." David Esbjornson is the director. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE GRADUATE
This pointless production, starring Kathleen Turner as Mrs. Robinson, is endless and full of dead air. There are exactly two pleasures here: Victor Slezak, as Mr. Robinson, and Murphy Guyer, as Benjamin's father; they depict beautifully the anger and anxiety that underlie their postwar poolside bonhomie. (4/15/02) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE GUYS
A dialogue between a fire captain who lost eight of his men on September 11th and an editor who helps him prepare their eulogies, written by Anne Nelson, a journalist, and directed by Jim Simpson, the Flea Theatre's artistic director. It's an artful and moving re-creation of the relationships New Yorkers formed as a result of that day—of the way that people "jumped tracks" and suddenly saw into each other's lives—and an admirable tribute to the men who died. (The Flea, 41 White St. 206-1515.)

HOUSE AND GARDEN
Alan Ayckbourn's linked plays "Garden" and "House" are set at the same time and place—a late-summer day, at an English country house—and they run simultaneously, with the same cast, on separate stages. (The actors have the unusual challenge of having to speed through the lobby in order to get to their places on each stage on time. But the audience sees no sign of this activity.) Most of the tiers of the English class system which you might expect to find at a country house are represented, so the plays are a sort of "Indoors, Outdoors" version of "Upstairs, Downstairs." It would have been interesting if our assumptions about the characters, based on what we saw in one play, were overturned or altered in some way when we saw the other, making us realize how little we know about people when we see them in only one context. But the surprises that do occur carry no psychological weight or emotional charge.

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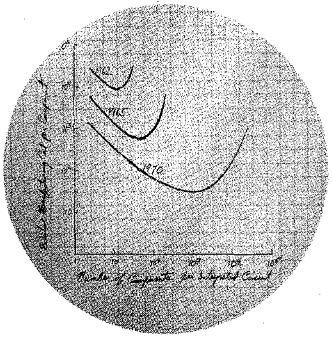

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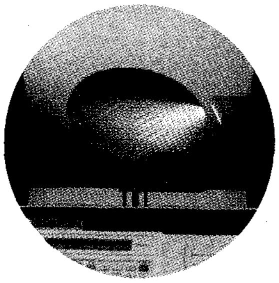

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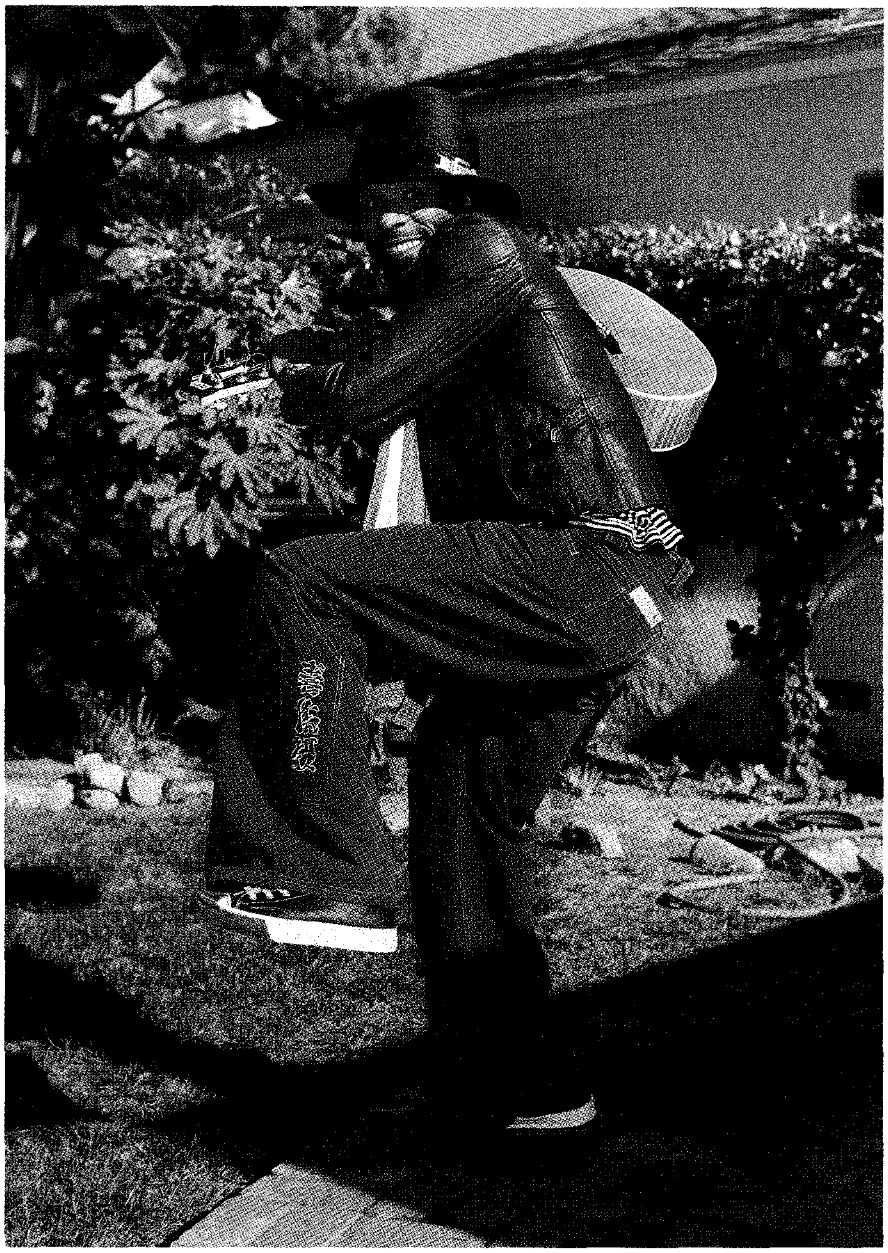


The singer Cody Chesnutt, at Central Park SummerStage (see Night Life—Concerts).

All the care and professionalism lavished on making sure that this train runs on time can't alter the fact that it has no destination. John Tillinger is the director. (6/3/02) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. Closes July 14.)

ICE FACTORY FESTIVAL
The second offering in Soho Think Tank's annual summer celebration of new works is "Utopians," by the Flying Machine, a movement-based troupe. July 10-13 at 7. The festival continues through Aug. 17. (Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. 966-4844.)

KAREN FINLEY
The performance artist presents a work in progress, "The Distribution of Empathy," which explores the emotions of New Yorkers after September 11th. Tuesdays at 9, through July 30. (Cutting Room, 19 W. 24th St. 691-1900.)

INTO THE WOODS
Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's 1987 fairy-tale-derived musical isn't so much a rethinking of fairy tales as it is a parable about growing up and finding your place in the community, and about learning to live with uncertainty and ambivalence. The archetypal material is treated with suitable directness and simplicity, and yet the show lacks none of the intelligence or emotional honesty we expect from Sondheim. Mr. Lapine is the director. (5/13/02) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

METAMORPHOSES
Ovid's tales, loosely adapted and directed by Mary Zimmerman, who has had the ingenious idea of staging the caprice of the gods in a swimming pool. The production is fun and full of wonder, but it illustrates rather than dramatizes psychic struggle. The show's gimmick, the pool, turns out to be its metaphor—refreshing and shallow. (3/18/02) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

MORNING'S AT SEVEN
Paul Osborne's 1939 back-porch drama is bland stuff, sort of Chekhov light, but the pleasing all-star cast puts this rickety workhorse through its paces. Directed by Daniel Sullivan. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Closes July 28.)

OKLAHOMA!
There are stupendous pleasures in the Royal National Theatre's version of Rodgers and Hammerstein's 1943 American classic. Many of them are due to the high-spirited, humorous choreography of Susan Stroman, and to Anthony Ward's picturesque set. But technique, which can make a show work, is not enough to make it wonderful. (4/1/02) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

PACIFIC OVERTURES
The New National Theatre of Tokyo presents a staging of Stephen Sondheim's 1976 musical, as part of the Lincoln Center Festival. Continues through July 13. (Avery Fisher Hall. 721-6500.)

THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD
J. M. Synge's classic 1907 comedy about a young man lionized by a remote Irish village after he shows up in their midst with a story of having killed his abusive father—and the fallout when the father shows up only slightly bloodied. The show explores issues of reputation, love, lust, and the thrill of scandal in a surprisingly modern way, and in remarkably beautiful language. The Irish Rep cast is strong, especially Aedin Moloney, as a lonely widow. Kirk Bookman's warm lighting makes the most of David Raphael's detailed stone-cottage set. Directed by Charlotte Moore with a sure hand. (132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737.)

PLAY YOURSELF
Craig Lucas directs a New York Theatre Workshop staging of Harry Kondoleon's play, about an aging Hollywood actress. (Century Center, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200.)

THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER
Mark Twain's novel has been adapted for the stage and musicalized by Neil Berg (score and lyrics) and Bernie Garza and Ray Roderick (book). (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

PRIVATE LIVES
In Noël Coward's comedy of bad manners, two wonderful actors, Alan Rickman and Lindsay Duncan, play the embattled exes Elyot and Amanda—dandies of detachment who jilt their new spouses and run away together to a Parisian love nest. Howard Davies's radical notion is to play Elyot and Amanda's physical passion for real. This allows him to capitalize on the wonderful chemistry between Rickman and Duncan, but it also throws the comedy weirdly off kilter. (5/6/02) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

REBEL WITHOUT A PAUSE
The comedian Reno goes to bed around 8 A.M.; her friends know never to call her before early afternoon. So she realized that something extraordinary was happening on September 11th when her phone started ringing just before nine. Her apartment was five blocks from the Twin Towers, and her account of the next few hours, days, and months is insightful and very, very funny. More concisely than almost anyone else has, Reno cuts to the core of many New Yorkers' complicated emotional reactions to the upwelling of blame, fear, patriotism, and heroism that has surrounded us. One part of her show consists of vaguely related passages of knee-jerk—and uncharacteristically dull—political commentary, but Reno still gives one of the clearest testaments yet to what that day was and what it's wrought for us all. (Lion, 410 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

RED HOT MAMA
Sharon McKnight portrays Sophie Tucker in a tribute to the vaudeville star. (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave., at 48th St. 935-5820.)

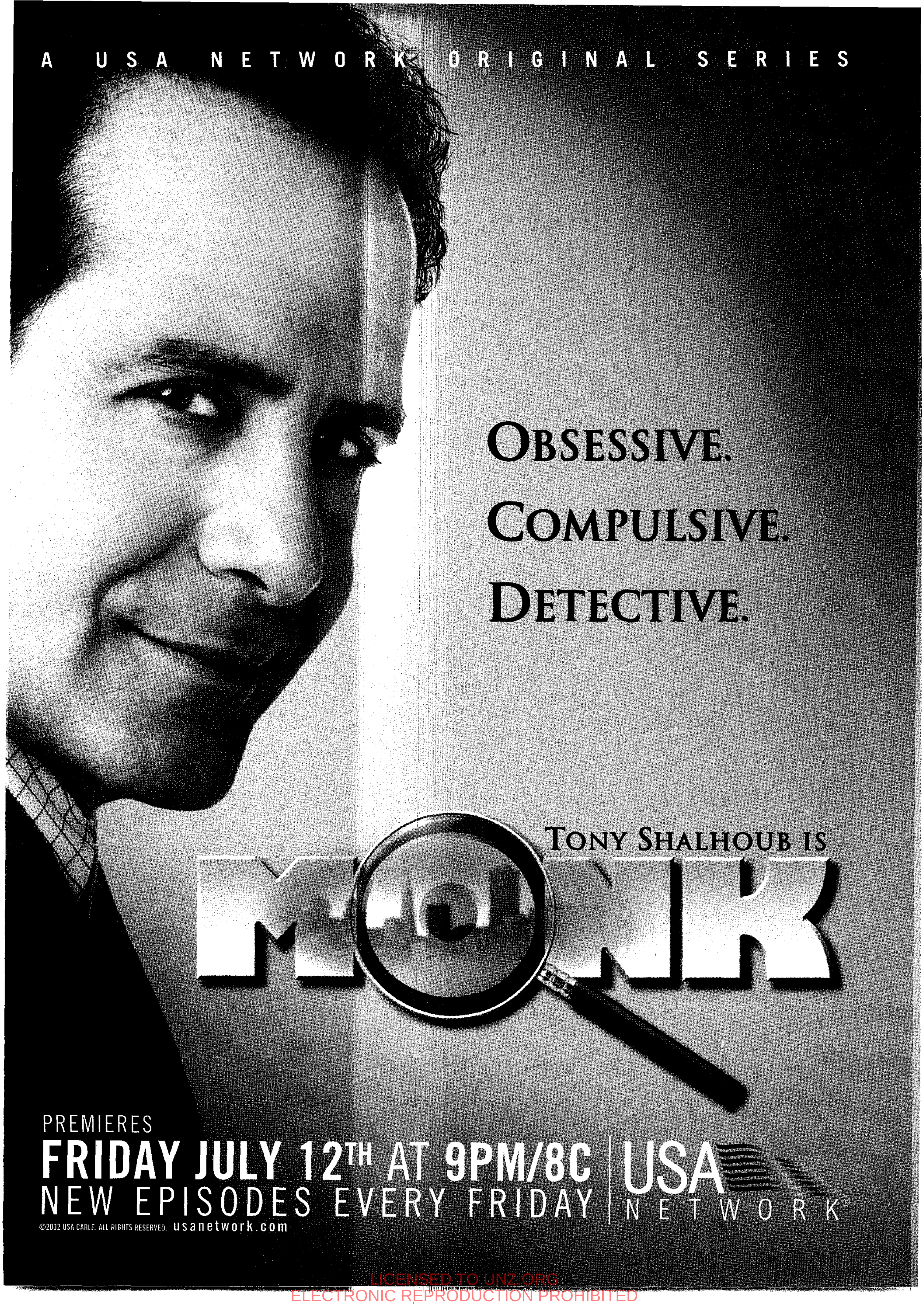
RICKY JAY: ON THE STEM
The master magician's tribute to the flimflammery and weird entertainments that have cropped up over the years along the length of Broadway, "the stem that winds the watch" of New York City. Prepare to be happily hornswoggled. Directed by David Mamet. (Second Stage, 307 W. 43rd St. 246-4422.)

SHOPPERS CARRIED BY ESCALATORS INTO THE FLAMES
Denis Johnson's dark comedy about a dysfunctional lower-middle-class family in Ukiah, California. (Vineyard, 108 E. 15th St. 239-6200.)

THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE
Just like the 1967 movie it's based on, this musical is supposed to be all madcap Jazz Age fizziness, but the harder the cast sings and dances, the flatter the enterprise falls. The colors seem garish rather than gay, the manic energy feels forced at gunpoint, and the only thing you recall about Sutton Foster's Millie after you leave the theatre is her huge white teeth and bouncy black bob. Call it thoroughly boring, shrilly. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

THUNDER KNOCKING ON THE DOOR
Leslie Uggams and Chuck Cooper lead the cast of a musical set in rural Alabama in the sixties, writ-

BRYCE DUFFY



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ten by Keith Glover (book) and Keb' Mo' and Anderson Edwards (music and lyrics). (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 307-4100.)

TOPDOG/UNDERDOG
The Public Theatre's production of Suzan-Lori Parks's play, starring Jeffrey Wright and Mos Def. George C. Wolfe is the director. (Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200. Closes July 28.)

21 DOG YEARS: DOING TIME@AMAZON.COM
Michael Daisey spent three years at Amazon during its headiest, do-no-wrong period. And now he's telling all. He's a charismatic performer, and up until the end, when he becomes a bit self-righteous, his show has the insightful hostility of the best comedy. The audience doesn't learn anything new about the dot-com bubble and its discontents, but it's fun to get the view from the inside. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 239-6200.)

VIENNA: LUSTHAUS (REVISITED)
In this splendid revival of Martha Clarke's 1986 dance-theatre piece, inspired by the psychosexual steaminess of fin-de-siècle Vienna, a handsome troupe of dancers, sometimes clothed in the style of characters in a Schnitzler play, sometimes unclothed in the style of figures in a Schiele painting, enact various states of alienation and desire in a gauzy atmosphere charged with premonitions of the Second World War. Inexorably, the whole thing gets to you like a beautiful, bad dream. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 239-6200.)

WHAT THE HELL'S YOUR PROBLEM: AN EVENING WITH DR. BOB NATHELSON
In the writer and director Tom Noonan's latest play, the audience is seated in the performance space, which is set up—folding chairs neatly aligned—as the seminar of a self-help guru. Everyone gets a name tag and a release form and is invited to come forward and "spill." There are a number of funny, strange, and disturbing moments as a succession of people take the hot seat and as the potentially explosive history between the seminar's staff members threatens to bubble up, and there's also some real tension: will the person next to you turn out to be an actor? And will Dr. Bob himself, unavoidably detained, ever show up? Noonan and his troupe have a nice improvisational grasp on the proceedings—unexpected things do happen—but the exercise, ultimately, may be more rewarding for the company than it is for the paying customers. (Paradise, 64 E. 4th St. 206-1515. Closes July 14.)

The Walkmen, in a two-night stand at Brownies (see Night Life—Clubs).

MARCELLUS HALL

LONG RUNS

AIDA
Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4747.
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4747.
BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES
Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370.
CABARET
Studio 54, at 254 W. 54th St. 239-6200.
CHICAGO
Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (ABRIDGED)
Century Center, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200.
CONTACT
Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.
DE LA GUARDA
Daryl Roth, 20 Union Sq. E., at 15th St. 239-6200.
FORBIDDEN BROADWAY: 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.
42ND STREET
Ford Center, 213 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.
THE FULL MONTY
Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200.
I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE
Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.
THE LION KING
New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.
LOVE, JANIS
Village Theatre, 158 Bleecker St. 307-4100.
LES MISÉRABLES
Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.
NOISES OFF
Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100.
PERFECT CRIME
Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401.
THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.
THE PRODUCERS
St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.
PROOF
Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.
PUPPETRY OF THE PENIS
John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.
RENT
Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000.
STOMP
Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.
THE TALE OF THE ALLERGIST'S WIFE
Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.
TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING
St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200.
UNDERNEATH THE LINTEL
Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 239-6200.
URINETOWN
Henry Miller, 124 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.
THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES
Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.

DANCE

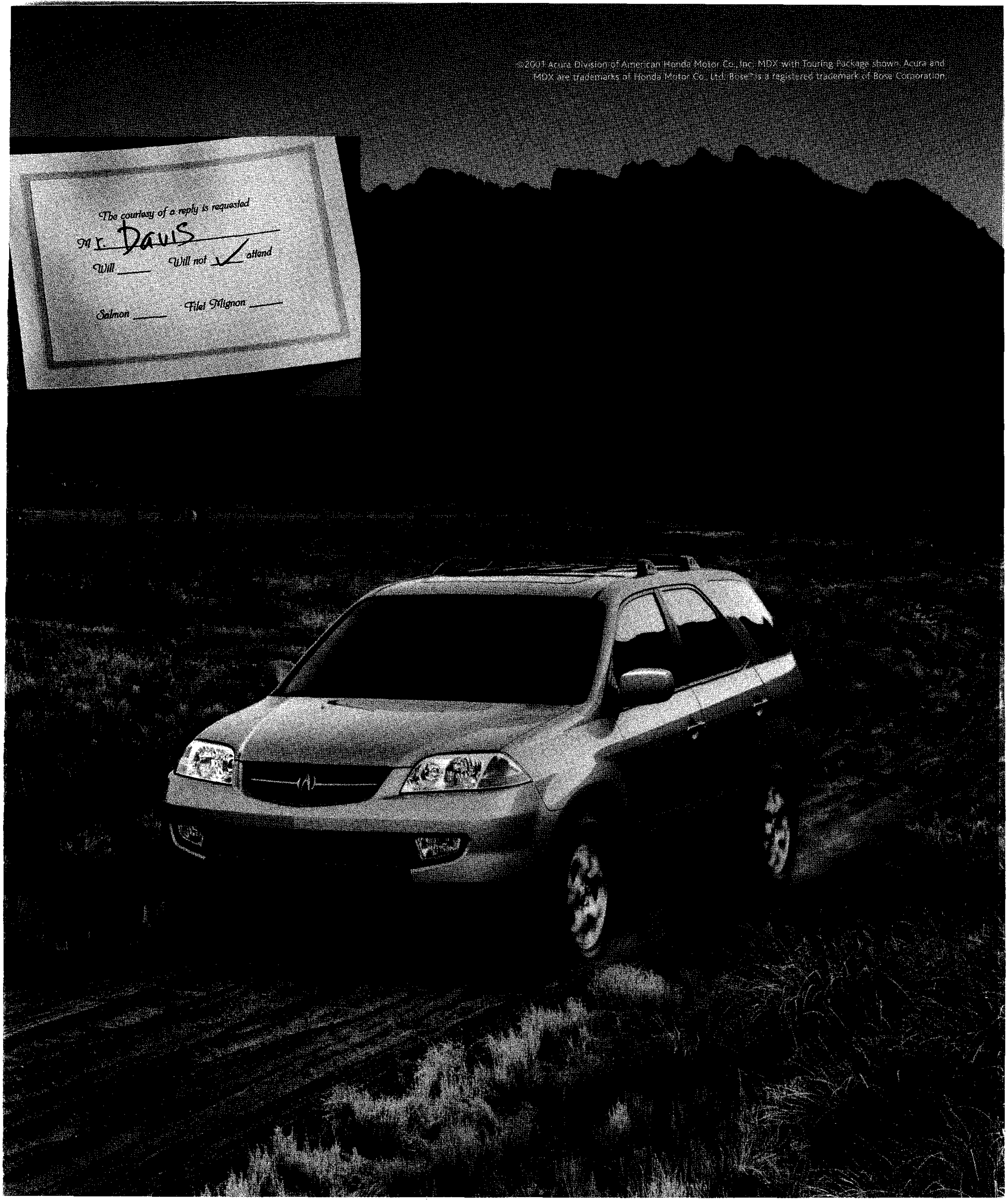
LINCOLN CENTER FESTIVAL
The Kirov Ballet brings four full-length ballets for its two-week engagement. July 8 and July 12 at 8, July 9 at 7, and July 10 at 2 and 8: "La Bayadère." ♦ July 11 and July 16 at 8 and July 13 at 2 and 8: "Swan Lake." ♦ July 15 at 8: "Don Quixote." (Metropolitan Opera House.) ♦ The Urban Bush Women, along with members of the National Song and Dance Company of Mozambique, present "Shadow's Child," the story of a twelve-year-old girl who journeys through the night to discover her identity. Mozambican craftsmen built the set, and the music and movement are based on traditional Makonde and Makua dance. July 9 at 8:30 and July 10-12 at 7. (Lincoln Center, Rose Building. For more information, call 721-6500.)

PILOBOLUS
There are two Piloboli, really, sharing the same thirty-one-year-old trademark: gluey acrobatics that transform the performers into all manner of creatures and things. Pilobolus One, which performs "Walklyndon," "Untitled," and "Day Two" (works from the first decade), doles out metaphor as well as optical illusion. In "Untitled," for example, the dancers become hairy-legged pre-Raphaelite giantesses who give birth to innocent Adams (their former bottom halves). Pilobolus Two consists of the same six excellent dancers performing pieces from the last few years; the movement has been emptied of content, though not so completely as to be seen as pure movement. Plodding story lines and cumbersome themes keep it looking wan and unsettled, like a hungry ghost. Of the three programs, the first and third include both old and new works; the second features only the new. (The Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. July 8-12 at 8, July 13 at 2 and 8, and July 15-16 at 8. Through July 20.)

"DIRTY WORK"
"Our work has always had shadows," says Dayna Hanson, who, with her friend Gaelen Hanson, runs 33 Fainting Spells, a tiny Seattle-based troupe that successfully combines the pedestrian wholesomeness of much American postmodern dance with European dance theatre's gloomy big ideas. "But now we're further down the pike, post-despair." The new work, which is less dancey than the women's previous shows, takes place at the end of the day, leaving time to ruminate—while exercycling, for example, or drinking a can of Tab or rolling around on the floor in a tutu unzipped down the back while a moody Anton Webern score plays on a public-school-style record player. "We usually create tight, seamless works," Dayna says. "This time, we needed to blow it open." (The Performing Garage, 33 Wooster St. 966-3651. July 11-14 at 8. Through July 21.)

THE NEW YORK CITY TAP FESTIVAL
The lineup of a hundred and eighty-seven performers includes Americans—including Jimmy Slyde, Gregory Hines, and Savion Glover—as well as Estonians, Slovakians, Germans, and the French-Japanese combo Tapage, with Olivia Rosenkrantz and Mari Fujibayashi. (The Duke Theatre, 229 W. 42nd St., near Broadway. 239-6200. July 8-14 at various times, and with a different program every night; for more information call 646-230-9564.)

CENTRAL PARK SUMMERSTAGE
Herbin Tamango van Cayseele and his Urban Tap appear with Gabri Christa's DanzAsia and the funk orchestra Burnt Sugar. (Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. July 12 at 8:30.)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Mr. Davis

Will ___ [✓ *Will not*] *attend*

Salmon ___ *Filet Mignon* ___

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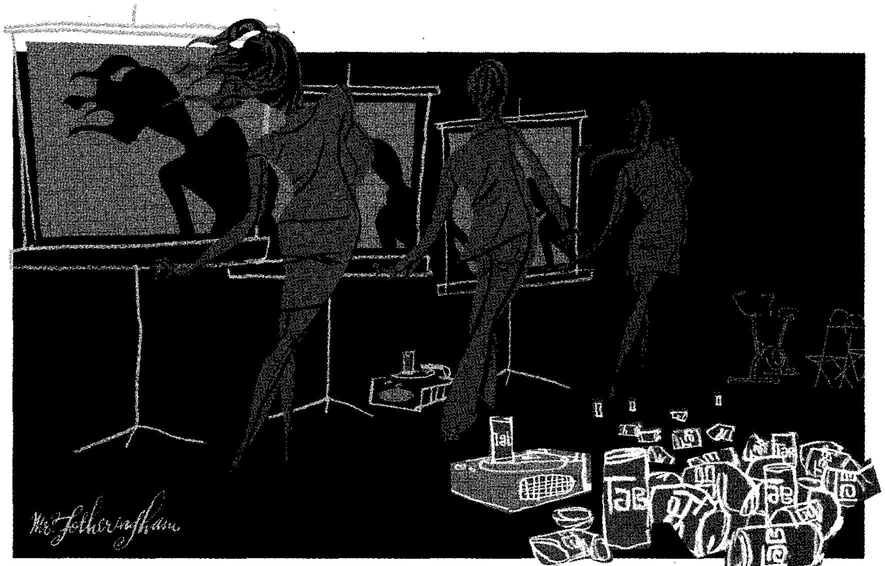
OUT OF TOWN

JACOB'S PILLOW DANCE FESTIVAL
July 10-12 at 8, July 13 at 2 and 8, and July 14 at 2: Grupo Corpo. ♦ July 11-12 at 8:15, July 13 at 2:15 and 8:15, and July 14 at 5: Sarah Skaggs Dance. (Becket, Mass. For information about tickets, call 413-243-0745.)



33 Fainting Spells, in "Dirty Work," at the Performing Garage (see Dance).

NIGHT LIFE
CONCERTS

CENTRAL PARK SUMMERSTAGE
Mostly free concerts in Manhattan's back yard. July 13 at 3: The up-and-coming Philadelphia-born singer **RES** (pronounced "Reese") enriches contemporary R. & B. with elements of hip-hop and alternative rock. Sharing the bill is RES's fellow neo-soul singer **Joi** and the producer **Raphael Saadiq,** along with **Cody Chesnutt.** The funk rocker Chesnutt has the flamboyant stage style (and occasionally foul mouth) of Prince, along with a mastery of acoustic and electronic style previously demonstrated only by Beck. Chesnutt's début album, which he created, appropriately enough, in his bedroom and which is due out this fall, is boldly titled "The Headphone Masterpiece." The two-CD collection jumps from sweet soul to raw hip-hop to spoken word with an ease and spontaneity seldom heard. July 14 at 3: The resilient West African ensemble the **Super Rail Band.** Formed in Mali in 1971 in response to the dictatorship of Moussa Traore, the band has seen such superstar singers as Salif Keita and Mory Kante pass through its ranks. Today it remains a premier ambassador of Manding swing, a hip-shaking genre that combines local melodies and rhythms with those of Latin music. Sharing the bill is a newly reunited **Orchestra Baobab.** From the early seventies until the early eighties, this group reigned atop the Senegalese and the West African music scene with its relatively languid Latin-influenced rhythms. They were bumped from their perch by a young performer named Youssou N'Dour, who revolutionized Senegalese music with his highly charged *mbalax* sound. The Baobab's return is a very welcome one indeed. (Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. 360-2777.)

MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING
The alfresco dancing at Lincoln Center continues on July 10 with a visit from Germany's **Andrej Hermlin Swing Dance Orchestra** (see also the "Swing Band: Return of an Era!" concert, below). July 11: The Afro-Puerto Rican sounds of **Viento de Agua.** July 12: **Vince Giordano and the Nighthawks** take dancers back to the days of the Cotton Club (see also "Jazz in July," below). July 13: **Juan (Coco) de Jesus** and his band Coco Merenson offer a night of merengue. July 16: **Tanguardia.** (For more information, call 721-6500. All shows are at 8, with dance lessons starting at 6:30.)

RIVER TO RIVER FESTIVAL
The wonderfully eccentric Canadian singer-songwriter **Jane Siberry** and the local crooner **Chocolate Genius** play Castle Clinton on July 11 at 7. (Battery Park. Free tickets, which are required, will be distributed at the venue the day of the show starting at 5.)

"SWING BAND: RETURN OF AN ERA!"
Andrej Hermlin (see also Midsummer Night Swing) brings his Swing Dance Orchestra to the Hotel Pennsylvania ballroom and pays tribute to Glenn Miller, whose song "Pennsylvania 6-5000" so famously references the hotel. The concert benefits the 9/11 Fund. (Seventh Ave. at 33rd St. 307-7171. July 11 at 7:30.)

CELEBRATE BROOKLYN!
July 12 at 7:30: The eternally hip Hoboken indie rockers **Yo La Tengo.** With the poet and former leader of the Brooklyn Funk Essentials **Everton Sylvester.** July 13 at 7:30: A daylong festival of African music with **Femi Kuti, Rokia Traoré, Hassan Hakmoun,** and others. (Prospect Park Bandshell, Prospect Park W. at 9th St. 718-855-7882, ext. 45.)

GILLIAN WELCH
A night of impeccable Americana with the young and gifted singer, who is joined by her longtime guitarist David Rawlings. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. July 12 at 9.)

NEW EDITION / EN VOGUE
In the eighties and nineties, these two bands laid the groundwork for the teen popsters and vocal groups that currently rule the charts. Their days at the top may be over, but their formula for grafting smooth harmonies onto slick R. & B. and topping it with sassy choreography remains bankable. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. July 13 at 7:30.)

RUSH
Returning after a five-year hiatus (following the untimely deaths of the drummer Neil Peart's wife and daughter), Canada's refreshingly fashion-oblivious power trio are back to business as usual with a new album, "Vapor Trails" (randomly selected lyric: "It's not the heat / It's the inhumanity") and a summer tour. (Jones Beach Theatre. July 15 at 7:30.)

"MAGHREB-MASHREQ: EAST-WEST ALCHEMY"
This year's Lincoln Center Festival brings together performers from North Africa and the Middle East. The opening night features two North American débuts: those of the twenty-seven-year-old Is-

EDWIN FOTHERINGHAM

raeli vocalist **Dikla** and the Algerian-born Parisian singer **Souad Massi.** (LaGuardia Concert Hall, 100 Amsterdam Ave., between 64th and 65th Sts. 721-6500. July 16 at 8. The musical portion of the festival continues through July 20.)

JAZZ IN JULY
The music they perform isn't what anyone would call cutting edge, but the work of such local stalwarts as the pianists **Dick Hyman** and **Marian McPartland** and the twenties and thirties revivalist **Vince Giordano** and his band the Nighthawks remains essential to the jazz ecosystem of the city. (Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5500. July 16 at 8. Through July 25.)

CLUBS

Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.

B. B. KING BLUES CLUB & GRILL
237 W. 42nd St. (997-4144)—July 10: A night of roots reggae with **Israel Vibration.** July 13-14: The blues matriarch **Etta James.** July 16: The sizzling guitar work of **Jimmie Vaughan.**

BLARNEY STAR
43 Murray St. (732-2873)—July 12: The fiddler **Kevin Burke,** who was a member of London's groundbreaking Celtic group, the Bothy Band, and remains one of the preëminent instrumentalists in Irish music, makes a rare solo appearance.

BOWERY BALLROOM
6 Delancey St. (533-2111)—July 10: One of the founding fathers of New York's willfully dissonant and short-lived No Wave scene in the late seventies, Brazilian-born **Arto Lindsay** went on to embrace the zesty pop of his homeland with the Ambitious Lovers. While his later work is significantly more accessible, including his latest release, "Invoke," the old atonal skronk lurks just beneath the surface. July 12-13: The double-drums, double-bass assault of the **Dirtbombs.** With the garage rock of the **Detroit Cobras.** July 16: **Dave Alvin** leads his band the Guilty Men through a night of gritty roots rock.

BROWNIES
169 Avenue A, at 10th St. (420-8392)—July 11-12: Can rich-kid post-mod rock be any good? To judge by the sounds of the **Walkmen,** the answer is yes. Formed from the nucleus of defunct but almost famous New York City rockers Jonathan Fire*eater, along with a new singer, Hamilton Leithauser, the band sheds its predecessors' blues-punk shtick for more mature anthems, characterized by lush walls of sound, tight rhythms, and patient melodies. July 13: The **Heroine Sheiks,** the raucous and wildly fun homespun combo led by the unpredictably antic singer Shannon Selberg (who occasionally blows a bugle).

JOE'S PUB
425 Lafayette St. (539-8777)—July 9-13: The thorny English troubadour **Richard Thompson** surveys a thousand years of popular music. July 14: **Hassan Hakmoun** (see Concerts—Celebrate Brooklyn!). July 15: **Orchestra Baobab** (see Concerts—Central Park SummerStage).

MERCURY LOUNGE
217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—July 10: A deity for self-respecting punk-rock guitarists the world over (even if they invariably ended up ripping him off), the blazing fretman **Wayne Kramer** and the legendary MC5 set the standard for aggressive guitar playing. The MC5 may be long gone, but Kramer's remained active (after a brief spell in the slammer) and will assuredly revisit his old band's standard, "Kick Out the Jams," to rousing effect.

S.O.B.'S
204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—July 11: **Cody Chesnutt** (see Concerts—Central Park SummerStage).

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

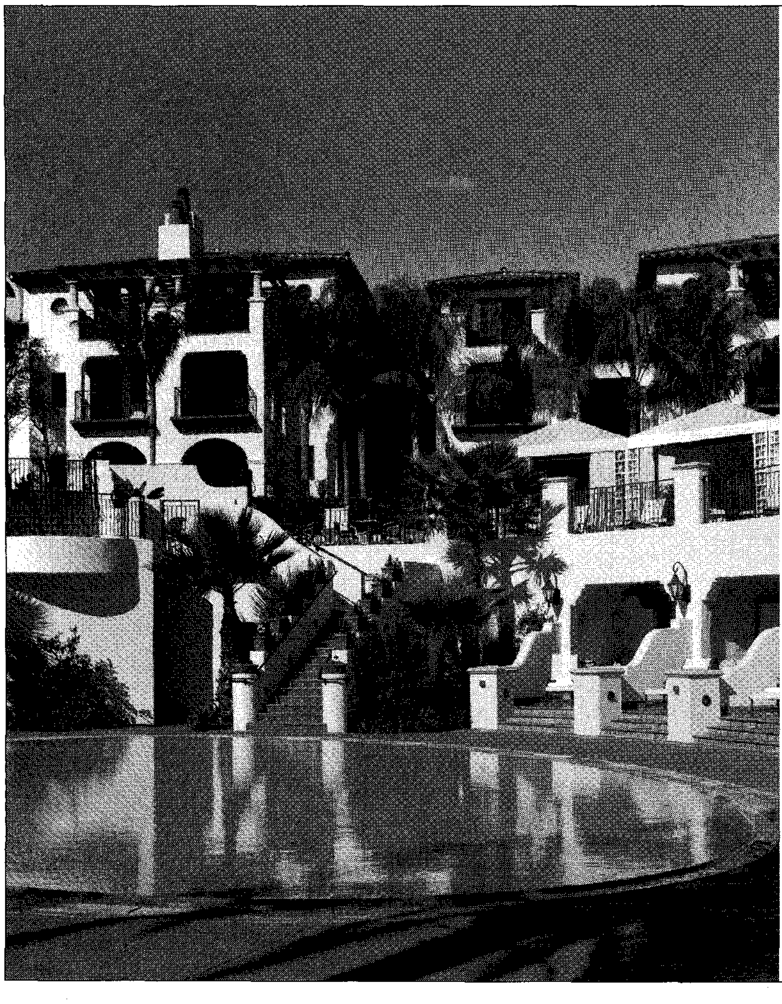
BLUE NOTE
131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through July 14: **Flora Purim** sings and **Airto Moriera** plays all manner of Brazilian percussion instruments; together this celebrated husband-and-wife team salute their great compatriot composer Milton Nascimiento.

IRIDIUM
1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (582-2121)—The saxophonist **George Coleman** (here with his quartet through July 14) may not be the toughest act to catch around town, but we take him for granted at our own peril. He's a ripsnorting tenor player who combines modernist expertise with a gritty edge that speaks of his deep Memphis roots. Mondays belong to the electric-guitar innovator **Les Paul.**

JAZZ STANDARD
116 E. 27th St. (576-2232)—Through July 14: The **Hilton Ruiz Latin Jazz Classics.** A rash of exciting young pianists have been making big noise at the corner where Latin music and mainstream jazz intersect, but Hilton Ruiz was there before them all. He's a veteran whose roots stretch back to teen-age gigs with Rahsaan Roland Kirk, and his harmonic sophistication is only sharpened by his rhythmic aplomb. Dining.

KNICKERBOCKER
33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—July 11-13: Working together with the easy grace that comes from a quarter century of playing as a duo, the pianist **Joanne Brackeen** and the bassist **Cecil McBee** can leap through a twisting bop progression or caress a ballad with a light touch.

SMOKE
2751 Broadway, between 105th and 106th Sts. (864-6662)—July 12-13: The **Rufus Reid** quintet. The bassist Reid is the man to call for any musical situation that demands both the utmost skill



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VILLAGE VANGUARD
178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through July 14: The **Buster Williams** quartet. After decades of providing the muscle for others, the splendid bassist Buster Williams has been stepping out on his own with a tightly knit quartet featuring the pianist **Mulgrew Miller** and the vibraphonist **Stefon Harris.** The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—The title of the city's first Paul Gauguin show in forty years, **"Gauguin in New York Collections: The Lure of the Exotic,"** seems to apply equally to the artist's histrionic life and the passion of New Yorkers for his work. This show makes a case for both, and the sixty drawings, paintings, and sculptures from the museum's collection, doubled with loans from private sources, dutifully trace the development of the Fauvist self-promoter chronologically, from stockbroker in Paris to cagey mystic fantasist in Tahiti. Through Oct. 20. ♦ Thomas Eakins (1844-1916), perhaps the greatest American artist before Abstract Expressionism, was American by the usual test: he couldn't have been anything else. The same might be said of his art, which is styleless. There is no Eakins look, only a distinctive pitch of ambition and excellence. A magnificent retrospective, originally organized by the curator Darrel Sewell for the Philadelphia Museum of Art, endorses the opinion of the artist's older friend and hero Walt Whitman: "Eakins is not a painter, he is a force." Cannily intermingled paintings, photographs, drawings, sculptures, and miscellaneous artifacts—such as grisly casts taken from parts of dissected cadavers—reveal the artist as a yeoman genius, strenuous in all things. Eakins made aesthetics sweat. It is astonishing how contemporary he feels today. Through Sept. 15. ♦ **"New York, New York: Photographs from the Collection."** Through Aug. 25. ♦ **"Adrian: American Glamour,"** an exhibition of the designs of Gilbert Adrian (1903-59), at the Costume Institute. Through Aug. 18. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART (MOMA QNS)
33rd St. at Queens Blvd., Long Island City. (708-9480)—The museum's temporary quarters in a big, blue renovated factory building near the Fifty-ninth Street Bridge are easy to get to, excitingly well designed, and, in its first shows, frantically entertaining, with a racy display of six classic automobiles from the museum's heretofore little-celebrated car collection and **"Tempo,"** a festivalist fun park dominated by conceptual and video installations on the alleged theme of time. Apart from gimmicky stuff with clocks and metronomes, the latter show suggests a transatlantic annex of the current Documenta in Germany with politically tinged works from Africa, Asia, and South America. Meanwhile, "Starry Night," "Demoiselles," and other jewels of the permanent collection get a chance in coarse, cold rooms to prove how tough they are. (Open Thursdays through Mondays, 10 to 5, and Friday evenings until 7:45.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—**"Moving Pictures."** When artists post production credits at the entrance to photography exhibitions (Gregory Crewdsen) or première their latest work at the Ziegfeld (Matthew Barney), it's clear that contemporary art has fallen under the spell of cinema. The Guggenheim tracks the seduction from the late sixties to the present in a rigorous and entertaining show of photography, film, and video from its permanent collection. The show opens whimsically in the lobby, with Nam June Paik's "TV Garden," dozens of monitors of varying sizes peeking out from a jungle of potted plants. It continues up the ramp chronologically, from early conceptual work by Acconci, Mendieta, and Nauman to a mini-multiplex: five small theatres screening works by young artists from Pierre Huyghe to Shirin Neshat. Through Jan. 12. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 9 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 9 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART
Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—**"Visions from America: Photographs from the Whitney Museum of American Art, 1940-2001."** Don't let the title or the opening image—a tattered flag by Robert Mapplethorpe—fool you. This show has less to do with America than with the evolution of American photography over the past sixty years. In any "greatest hits" show, the choices can seem arbitrary; here it's the disjointed thematic groupings. In the first gallery a group of New York pictures from the forties and fifties (Weegee's drunken socialites, Feininger's lunch-hour rush down Fifth Avenue) segues inexplicably into a series of abstract patterns (Aaron Siskind's tar on asphalt and Minor White's ice crystals). The show's theme may be best summed up in its playful, art-about-art works like Laurie Simmons's glamorous portrait of a camera with legs or William Anastasi's deadpan series "Five Photographs/Five Cameras," in which only four cameras appear, as the fifth records them. Through Sept. 22. ♦ Joan Mitchell, the long-underrated second-generation Abstract Expressionist who died in 1992 at her home near Monet's Giverny, spoke paint. A sumptuous retrospective confirms her as a major artist. Mitchell's varieties of abstract landscape conjure nature (including the difficult human kind, in ornery and exacerbated moods) out of pigmented stuff with authoritative abandon. Lessons of Pollock, de Kooning, and, yes, Monet are apparent but thoroughly subsumed. As with great Monets, you sometimes can't tell what you are looking at. It's paint, sure, but as a medium of metaphysical mystery. Certain paintings seem to be at once all wall and all window. Through Sept. 29. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6; Fridays, 1 to 9.)

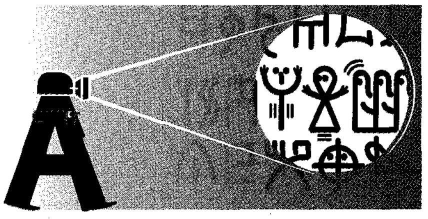
MUSEO DEL BARRIO
Fifth Ave. at 104th St. (831-7272)—**"Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera, and Twentieth-Century Mexican Art: The Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection."** Seven self-portraits by Kahlo form the heart of this show tracing the development of Mexican modernism from the teens to the fifties. The most riveting is "Diego on My Mind," which shows Kahlo's third eye sprouting a picture of the Mexican muralist while tendrils of her hair curl outward; she's both Medusa and a black widow at the center of her web. The show also includes numerous portraits of art patrons Jacques and Natasha Gelman, whose collection is the basis for the exhibition. They range from a hackneyed Angel Zárraga of Mr. Gelman, a movie producer, on the set, to a sexually charged Rivera of the glamorous Mrs. Gelman surrounded by calla lilies. Through Sept. 8. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN
1 Bowling Green (514-3700)—**"Booming Out: Mohawk Ironworkers Build New York."** For a hundred years, Mohawk ironworkers have been "booming out," travelling from communities in upstate New York and Canada to the city, working on bridges and skyscrapers from the Empire State Building to the George Washington Bridge. This show documents six generations of Mohawk men from two nations (Akwesasne and Kahnawake), combining pictures by photojournalists (including Lewis Hine's famous image of a precipitous lunch on an I-beam) with images shot by the boomers themselves. (All are mounted on panels and interspersed with explanatory text.) There is a section devoted to the World Trade Center, dealing with both its construction and its demise—and the museum's location, just a few blocks from Ground Zero, heightens the impact of this already moving show. Through Oct. 15. (Open daily, 10 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

BOOK CURRENTS

Cutting Off the Tongue

"Not quite the Greek you taught me," wrote Michael Ventris to his old classics teacher after decoding an ancient Aegean script that had baffled experts for years. In **THE MAN WHO DECIPHERED LINEAR B** (Thames & Hudson), Andrew Robinson narrates the short, brilliant career of a self-effacing amateur, an architect who spoke at least ten languages and learned Swedish in two weeks. In **LOST LANGUAGES** (McGraw-Hill), Robinson places Ventris's work alongside two other famous decipherments—that of Egyptian hieroglyphs on the Rosetta Stone and the ongoing decipherment of outrageously complex Mayan glyphs—before moving on to ancient scripts that have yet to be cracked, including Rongorongo, a script from Easter Island that looks as if Keith Haring might have designed it. Undeciphered scripts, one veteran of the field says, are "powerful kook attractors," while another cautions that "the simplest, most mundane and least surprising explanation of any inscription, is likely to be the correct one."



The reasons a language gets written down in the first place seem to vary. In the Mediterranean, says Andrew Dalby in his **DICTIONARY OF LANGUAGES** (Columbia), the impetus was a need for reliable accounting. Bookkeeping, in other words, preceded books. However, David Crystal warns in **LANGUAGE DEATH** (Cambridge) that "when a language dies which has never been recorded in some way, it is as if it has never been." Many scholars believe that the coming century will see the death of half of the six thousand or so languages currently spoken—about one language every two weeks. Crystal's most piquant insight into the problem comes in a South African taxi whose driver speaks all eleven of his country's official languages but whose chief ambition is "to earn enough to enable all his children to learn English."

—*Leo Carey*

NIGEL HOLMES

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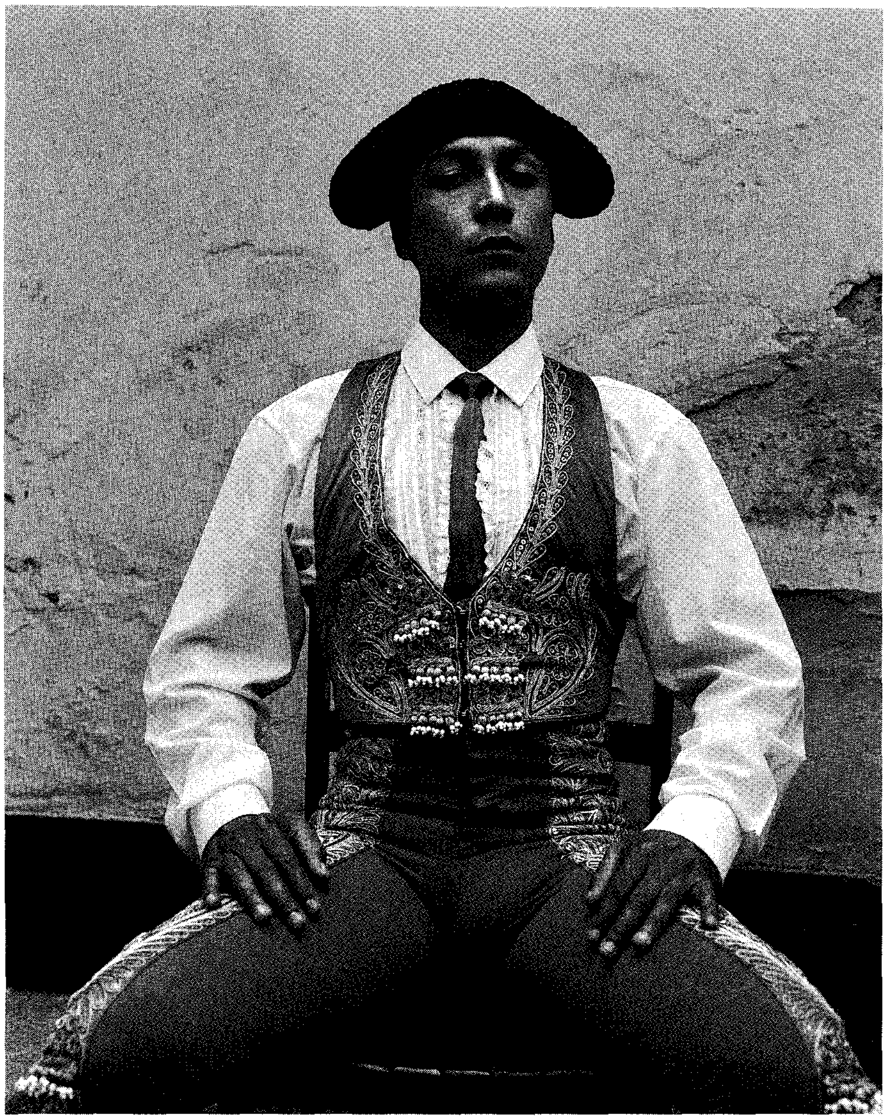

One of Ruven Afanador's young bullfighters, in Lima, Peru (see Photography).

GALLERIES-UPTOWN

Summer-hours warning: many galleries are open Mondays through Fridays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. Others follow the normal Tuesday-to-Saturday schedule. It's best to call ahead.

"DANGEROUS BEAUTY"

This intelligent, if cautionary, show details our cultural obsession with beauty. Pillowy lips have never looked worse than in photographs by Orlan documenting her own surgical procedure. Hernan Bas lampoons the quest for thinness in a photograph of a wraithlike man shooting up Slim-Fast. Fear of aging is touched on by Margi Geerlinks's photograph of an elderly twin literally smoothing out her sister's wrinkles—thanks to digital manipulation. Much of the work has a Surrealist bent, notably Daniella Dooling's "REMdress," a negligee made of thousands of fake eyelashes, just the thing to wear to tea with Meret Oppenheim. Through Sept. 8. (The Jewish Community Center, 334 Amsterdam Ave., at 76th St. 646-505-4444.)

"LINGER"

Upon entering the small front gallery, viewers may feel they've stumbled into a midsummer night instead of an ingenious group show that gracefully mixes art and design, and established and emerging artists. Three lanterns flicker near a picnic table (the lanterns were designed by Richmond Burton and the table by Jennifer Bartlett, both painters) under silvery leaves (in an intimate Alex Katz landscape) as moths dart through moonlight (captured on videotape by Susan Jennings). Around the corner, weeds by sculptor Tony Matelli sprout along the perimeter of the room as Monet meets Marvel Comics in a large-scale Lichtenstein print of water lilies. Through July 26. (Artemis Greenberg Van Doren, 730 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 445-0444.)

Short List

JOHN GRAHAM

York, 21 E. 65th St. 772-9155. Through July 31.

GALLERIES-CHELSEA

"AMERICAN STANDARD"

Like good sci-fi or film noir, this group show (subtitled "(Para)Normality and Everyday Life") retools familiar plot lines to deliver delicious shocks. The show—from Diane Arbus's ghoulish portrait of a Disneyland castle to Hiroshi Sugimoto's blank, glowing drive-in screen to Vija Celmins's enigmatic hot plate and Henry Wessel's forlornly eerie porch light—feels like an exhibition of disturbing recurring dreams. The curator, Gregory Crewdson, is known primarily as a photographer of David Lynchish suburban tableaux that can be pushy and overheated. But in this role he zeroes in on Americana's garish, creepy nullity. Not many exhibitions could justify inclusion of a still from Spielberg's "Close Encounters of the Third Kind." Here, however, the vision of Richard Dreyfuss building Devil's Tower in his den seems right at home. Through Aug. 16. (Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. 206-9300.)

"GODDESS"

The show contrasts feminist art from the seventies with recent work by younger artists similarly interested in spirituality and mysticism (not to mention naked bodies). Feminist art is often deemed essentialist and insensitive to issues of race, a concern the gallery attempts to redress with inclusions of work by such young African artists as Tracey Rose and Ingrid Mwangi. In a wry twist on tokenism, the show opens with a photograph from 1998 by the male artist Lyle Ashton Harris. The image—a white bird perched on the shoulder of a black woman—contrasts playfully with a small color photograph from 1975 of Louise Bourgeois modelling a bulbous latex suit on her stoop as a young black neighbor looks on. Through July 26. (Galerie Lelong, 528 W. 26th St. 315-0470.)

"PENETRATION"

With a title like "Penetration," what do you expect this two-gallery group exhibition to be about? Bingo! But when the literal-mindedness of Jeff Koons, Sigmar Polke, Donald Moffett, and Matthew Barney gets tiresome (and it does), you can turn for headier pleasures to Rudolf Stingel's pink Styrofoam harem screen, Ricci Albenda's biomorphic plaster wall addition, Gordon Matta-Clark's hole in the wall, and Sarah Sze's marvellous concatenation of strings, motors, pulleys, paper, and fans, which literally enters a hole in the Petzel ceiling, to emerge from the Boesky floor directly upstairs. Grand old men like Andy Warhol, Bruce Nauman, and Jasper Johns show up, only to be bettered by Sze and Louise Bourgeois (the grande dame contributes a fabric totem sculpture). But the pièce de résistance is two doll-size, working elevators by Maurizio Cattelan, which penetrate the building's innards, at least in the imagination (the site of greatest gratification, after all). Through Aug. 15. (Petzel, 680-9467; Boesky, 680-9889; 535 W. 22nd St., for both galleries.)

"TEXAS IN NEW YORK"

Thom Andriola's thirty-year-old New Gallery, in Houston, isn't new at all, but its stock remains exotic to Chelsea. Some pieces can be hard to take seriously at first (why is Larry Bell working in black denim?), but others fit right in, including David Fulton's blanket of soap scraps between waxed paper, and three videos by foreign artists passing time in the Lone Star State. Kristina Spritzer's ominously titled "Meta-Metaphor-Metamorphosis," turns out to be a clip of the artist smearing glue on her torso and then peeling it off, in a surprisingly natural mixture of grade-school pastime and grownup sensuality. Through July 13. (Stux, 529 W. 20th St. 352-1600.)

Short List

TONY GRAY

Debs, 525 W. 26th St. 643-2070.
Through July 28.

JOAN MITCHELL

Cheim & Read, 547 W. 25th St. 242-7727.
Through Aug. 18.

GALLERIES-DOWNTOWN

YOSHITAKA AMANO

In 1967, at the age of fifteen, Yoshitaka Amano moved to Tokyo to make his name in animation. He soon became the driving force of such cartoon classics as "Speed Racer" and "G-Force." Later, he came to be seen as the godfather of *anime* and *manga*, and therefore indirectly responsible for everything from Pokemon to the art stardom of Japanese Popsters like Mariko Mori and Takashi Murakami. Given the extravagant aesthetic of most *anime* productions, his stark paintings—cooler than cool automobile lacquer on aluminum panels—exercise a restraint exciting only to initiates. But his series of wide-eyed, pixie faces sketched in ink on rice paper emit a weird buzz that's equal parts techno and ancient. Through Aug. 3. (249 Centre St. 334-9255.)

KUTLUG ATAMAN
"Never My Soul!" is a three-and-a-half-hour comic ramble about Türkan Soray—not the Sophia Loren of Turkish cinema, but a transsexual expatriate fan of hers with kidney problems living in Lausanne. False eyelashes fly amid suggestions that life is not as tragic as it seems. At one point, a fellow-transsexual says, "After I have my operation and change my ID, I might get married for love." Through July 13. (Lehman Maupin, 39 Greene St. 965-0753.)

BO BARTLETT
Bartlett's paintings flaunt the influence of mentors like Andrew Wyeth and Nelson Shanks, the portraitist of Princess Di. This batch leaves behind the magic realism of such works as "Leviathan," which showed two men cutting Jonah's body from a beached whale, for scenes so simple they might be Ralph Lauren ads. A man in rolled-up khakis flashes a crescent of white fabric above his head; a girl on a promontory pulls an American flag around her shoulders; and the striking "Virgin of Rockland" stands in her underpants before open windows and a sleeping baby in a moment of domestic peace to update Rockwell. Through July 15. (P.P.O.W, 476 Broome St. 941-8642.)

Short List

ELLSWORTH KELLY
Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. 219-2166.
Through July 24.

PHOTOGRAPHY

RUVEN AFANADOR
This Colombian-born photographer known for his surreal take on models in haute-couture fashion has turned to other corseted and glamorized bits of eye candy: bullfighters. Models in ball gowns face less mortal danger in their line of work than these novice toreros, but here the boys are no less romanticized or sexualized than the cover girls. Afanador captures the opulent pageantry so central to the corrida, and the handsome students meet his camera with a cocky, macho narcissism that belies the fact that they're in sequins and see-through hose, or nude except for a funny hat. In these lushly homoerotic images, Afanador seems to take particular delight in capturing the young men as they get into or out of their *taleguillas*, the beautifully embroidered tight-fitting breeches that leave little, sometimes nothing, to the imagination. Opens July 11. (Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St. 223-1059.)

KATHLEEN JOHNSON
The L.A. artist Kathleen Johnson uses disposable underwater cameras to explore the shallows of white-walled pools native to Californian back yards. The large panorama prints focus on the steps that lead into and out of the water and on the shimmery white light in the blue, blue water that slides over the rounded edges of the underwater architecture. Unlike Ed Ruscha's deadpan series on California pools, Johnson's images take you down into the water and leave you there, breathing easy. Through Aug. 9. (Lucas Schoormans, 508 W. 26th St. 243-3159.)

TENESH WEBBER
In the age of digital techniques, Tenesh Webber's huge silver-gelatin prints—of tiny found objects such as cotton balls or a wire flying in an inky black void—feel refreshingly pure and daring. In "Untitled (Dots)," spangles of smeared white spots loop around the frame, and in "Swing I," they all but dance, scattershot and exuberant. It's a testament to Webber's skills as a stylist that such pictures, whose minimalism and lack of pretense could easily emit nothing but studied sombreness, instead feel playful, kinetic, and richly suggestive. Through July 26. (Milo, 552 W. 24th St. 414-0370.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY
1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. 857-0000—**"George Tice: Urban Landscapes."** Since 1967, George Tice has used a view camera to inventory the urban and suburban landscapes of his native New Jersey. The rich black-and-white prints (Tice was Steichen's printer) are reminiscent of Berenice Abbot's "Changing New York" work, but more in synch with the sensibility of Robert Adams, his contemporary. Tice documents the dawn of the chain-store era, showing marquees that have lost their twinkling lights and chrome-plated diners that don't quite shine anymore beside butcher shops and gas stations out of Norman Rockwell. In downtown Newark, Tice composed a photograph so that an old church spire still (but only barely) rises above the young skyscrapers of downtown commerce. ♦ **"Manual: Two Worlds—the Collaboration of Ed Hill and Suzanne Bloom"** and **"Dust to DNA: Kevin Clark and Mikey Flowers 9/11."** All shows through Sept. 1. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10-5; Fridays, 10-8; Saturdays and Sundays, 10-6.)

Short List

RON GALELLA
Paul Kasmin, 293 Tenth Ave. 563-4474.
Through Aug. 2.

RUSS MEYER
Feigen, 535 W. 20th St. 929-0500.
Through July 27.

"THE ANTIQUARIAN AVANT-GARDE"
Sarah Morthland, 511 W. 25th St. 242-7767.
Through Aug. 9.

"BUGS, WEEDS, AND ZOOBABIES"
John Stevenson, 338 W. 23rd St. 352-0070.
Through Aug. 10.

See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the National Museum of the American Indian.

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CLASSICAL MUSIC
OPERA

LINCOLN CENTER FESTIVAL: BRIGHT SHENG'S "THE SILVER RIVER"
Sheng's music—glittering, lean, and smart—is only a part of this small but extravagant entertainment, one of two Chinese chamber operas the festival is presenting this summer that merge the cultural influences of East and West. The river in question is the Milky Way, which two lovers (one a cowherd, the other a goddess) can cross just once a year, meeting on a bridge made of the folded wings of magpies. The operatic passion of Sheng's score (based in the sounds of the pi-pa and percussion) is nicely balanced by David Henry Hwang's libretto, an irreverently contemporary take on an ancient, sentimental tale; Christine Jones's décor, centered on a twenty-foot waterfall, provides a dark and magical ambience. Ong Keng Sen is the director, with choreography by Muna Tseng. (John Jay Theatre, Tenth Ave. at 58th St. 721-6500. July 16 at 8:30. Through July 21.)

OPERA FESTIVAL OF NEW JERSEY
July 12 at 8: Britten's **"The Rape of Lucretia,"** with Phyllis Pancella, David Adam Moore, and Scott Altman; David Agler conducts. ♦ July 13 at 4: The final performance of Renaud Doucet and André Barbe's production of **"La Traviata,"** set amid the frivolity of the Roaring Twenties. With Yalí-Marie Williams, Mark Hervieux, and Christopher Robertson; Joseph Rescigno. ♦ July 14 at 2: **"The Barber of Seville,"** with Margaret Lattimore, Daniel Belcher, Jesús Garcia, and Kevin Glavin; Bernard Labadie. (McCarter Theatre, Princeton, N.J. 609-258-2787.)

CONCERTS IN TOWN

MANNES BEETHOVEN INSTITUTE
The distinguished pianist Jacob Lateiner joins Nicholas Kitchen and Yeesun Kim, the Borromeo Quartet's first violinist and cellist, and others for a program including the Piano Trio in E-Flat Major, Op. 70, No. 2, and the Piano Sonata in A-Flat Major, Op. 110. (Mannes College of Music, 150 W. 85th St. July 10 at 8. Tickets at the door.)

BARGEMUSIC
July 11-12 at 7:30: Schubert's lilting "Arpeggione" Sonata, an emblem of everything people hold dear about that melancholy poet of *alt Wien*, isn't quite the repertory staple it used to be, so hearing it played by the cellist Matt Haimovitz—a decisive and unconventional performer of music new and old—should be refreshing. The pianist Navah Perlman accompanies him on a program that also includes music by Beethoven and Mozart (the Piano Quartet in G Minor, featuring the violinist Mark Peskanov and the violist Toby Hoffman). ♦ July 13 at 7:30 and July 14 at 4: An all-Brahms program, including the Cello Sonata in E Minor and the Piano Quartet in A Major, with Peskanov, Hoffman, the cellist Edward Arron, and the pianist Paul Ostrovsky. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-2083.)

SUNDAYS ON THE ISLAND
An afternoon of string quartets by Beethoven (the Op. 95, "Serioso") and Brahms, presented at a charming City Island country inn. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., the Bronx. 212-927-9194. July 14 at 12:30.)

THE NAUMBURG ORCHESTRA
Richard Westerfield conducts an all-Brahms program with the orchestra, an ensemble of conservatory players, including the "Academic Festival" Over-

TABLES FOR TWO

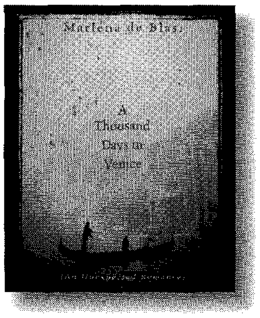
GROCERY
288 Smith St., Brooklyn (718-596-3335)—"Your appetizer's late because I dropped it on the floor," the chef Charles Kiely whispers. "I just wanted to make it look nice again." He sets down an artfully tousled plate of (impeccable) chicken livers and charred balsamic onions, then scurries back to the kitchen Groucho-style. Later, his co-chef and partner, Sharon Pachter, stops by to recommend a wine from the all-over-the-map list (Tasmania?), and toward the end of the night, as the small room of thirteen tables empties, she sits down to talk neighborhood apartments.

The couple's mi-casa-tu-casa routine is so over the top that at times it can distract you from the food, which is quite a trick, because Grocery excels at big concentrated flavors and country-house meats: pasta with "house-made" sausage, roasted tomato, and kale; marinated skirt steak with sautéed escarole; slow-rendered duck in caramelized wine sauce with spoonbread. The appetizers—those chicken livers, the white-wine risotto and shrimp with English peas and orange—hold nothing back; even the plain salad ("teen-age greens," according to the menu) gives you a little attitude. The power-hitter philosophy can lead to the occasional strikeout—one trout entrée came out spongy and sodden—but it doesn't matter. Kiely has the best slugging percentage on Smith Street.

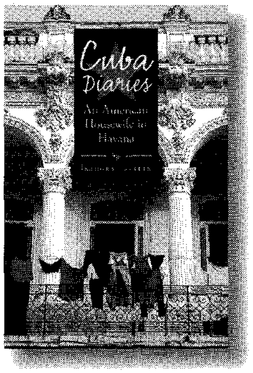
The décor at Grocery heads in the opposite direction: simple paper-topped tables in a slate-gray room up front, café tables under the fig tree and lush ivy-draped walls out back, in a shotgun arrangement with the kitchen in the middle—where Kiely and Pachter's Lucy-and-Ricky slapstick takes place in plain view. Diners used to "Kitchen Confidential"-style culinary egos may take it for an act. If it is, it grows on you. Reservations at the small place can be a problem. "We really can't give you your corner table that night," Pachter said on a recent call. She had to hold it for a couple who got engaged there. "They come every week." (Open Mondays through Saturdays for dinner only. Entrées $17-$21.)

—*Kevin Conley*

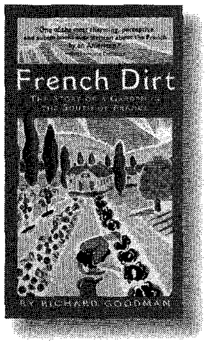
Get Out of Town . . . . . .



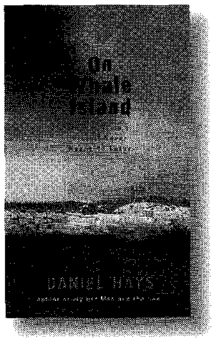
Marlena de Blasi
A THOUSAND DAYS IN VENICE: An Unexpected Romance
A Book Sense 76 Selection
"Chef and author Marlena de Blasi assembles a heady mix of ingredients to make *A Thousand Days in Venice* an irresistible grown-up love story."—*USA Today*



Isadora Tattlin
CUBA DIARIES: An American Housewife in Havana
A SHANNON RAVENEL BOOK • A Book Sense 76 Selection
"An inspired record of four years in Fidel Castro's Cuba, where the past is present—both tragically and hilariously."
—*The New York Times Book Review*



Richard Goodman
FRENCH DIRT: The Story of a Garden in the South of France
"One of the most charming, perceptive, and subtle books ever written about the French by an American."
—*San Francisco Chronicle*



Daniel Hays
ON WHALE ISLAND: Notes from a Place I Never Meant to Leave
Author of the *New York Times* bestseller *My Old Man and the Sea*
On a desolate, storm-battered island off the Nova Scotia coast, Daniel Hays, his wife, and his stepson decide to trade in civilization for a Swiss Family Robinson existence. What results is part travelogue, part survival handbook, part family therapy session, and all raucous fun.

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ture and the Violin Concerto (with Tomohiro Okumura). (Naumburg Bandshell, Central Park, mid-Park at 72nd St. July 16 at 7:30. No tickets required.)

CONCERTS OUT OF TOWN

TANGLEWOOD: "CELEBRATING SEIJI"
Seiji Ozawa's twenty-nine-year tenure at the helm of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, which concludes this summer, is celebrated in this week's round of concerts. July 10 at 8:30: The baritone Matthias Goerne sings Schubert's "Winterreise," a long journey of a very different kind. Eric Schneider is the pianist. ♦ July 12 at 8:30: The party begins with the annual Leonard Bernstein Concert, with Ozawa conducting the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra in the "Candide" Overture, Dvořák's Cello Concerto (with Mstislav Rostropovich), and Brahms's Symphony No. 1. ♦ July 13 at 8:30: "Seiji and Friends," a B.S.O. concert conducted by Ozawa, Rostropovich, and John Williams. Among the party animals scheduled to appear are Jessye Norman, Marcus Roberts, and the Boys Choir of Harlem. ♦ July 14 at 2:30: More friends, including the pianist Peter Serkin and the singers Christine Goerke and Florence Quivar, take the stage for a more formal, final concert of Berlioz (the "Symphonie Fantastique") and Beethoven (the "Choral Fantasy"). ♦ July 16 at 8:30: The Emerson String Quartet visits Ozawa Hall for a program of Beethoven's "Razumovsky" Quartets. (Lenox, Mass. 888-266-1200.)

ASTON MAGNA FESTIVAL
The noted early-music festival offers a program of Bach (the cantata "Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut," and the Concerto for Oboe d'Amore) and Vivaldi, featuring the soprano Sharon Baker and the violinist Daniel Stepner, the festival's artistic director. (Olin Hall, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y. July 12 at 8. 845-758-7425.)

THE WEEKEND OF CHAMBER MUSIC
A piquantly eclectic mix of Weber, Mozart (the Piano Quartet in G Minor), Steve Reich ("Clapping Music"), and Judith Shatin, featuring the flutist Judith Pearce and the violinist Mark Rush. (Hortonville Presbyterian Church, Hortonville, N.Y. July 13 at 8. 845-932-8414.)

BANG ON A CAN SUMMER INSTITUTE
It seems startling, at first, that the Bang on a Can Festival, the brightest light of New York's avant-garde music scene, now has its own little Tanglewood—a potent symbol of establishment respectability. But the appointment of Steve Reich as its first composer-in-residence should guarantee that everything doesn't stay on the straight and narrow. The first of two concerts features the virtuoso Bang on a Can All-Stars playing music by Don Byron, Evan Ziporyn, and, of course, the festival's founders, Michael Gordon, David Lang, and Julia Wolfe. The setting is the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, a campus of renovated nineteenth-century industrial buildings. (87 Marshall St., North Adams, Mass. 413-662-2111. July 13 at 8.)

PIANOSUMMER AT NEW PALTZ
Steven Lubin gives the first concert of this summer's institute and festival, founded six years ago by Vladimir Feltsman. Within the ranks of the early-music movement, Lubin's artistry is exceptional for its subtlety and expressive range; he performs sonatas by Mozart and Beethoven (the Sonata No. 1 in F Minor) on the fortepiano, then switches to a modern keyboard for music by Schubert and Chopin (the Sonata No. 3 in B Minor). (McKenna Theatre, State University of New York at New Paltz. 845-257-3904. July 13 at 8.)

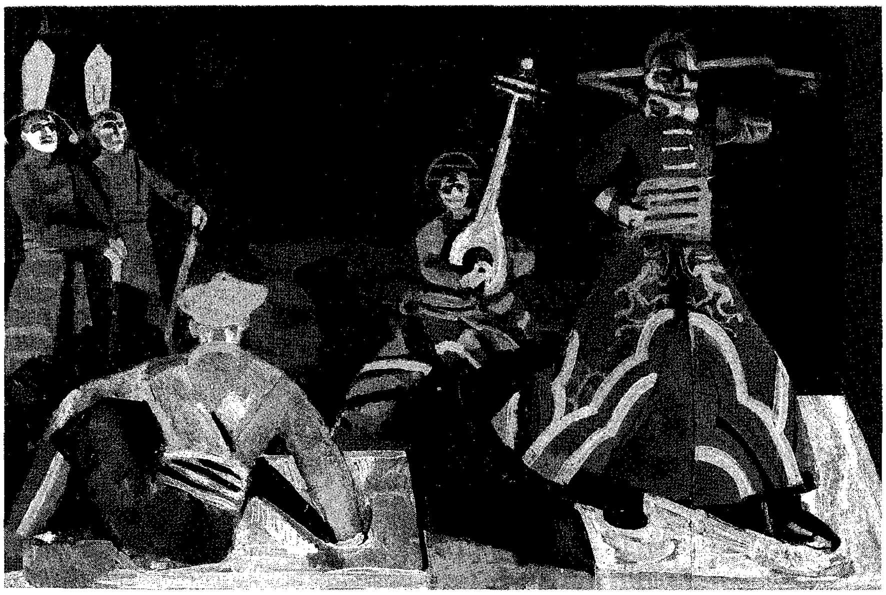
CARAMOOR FESTIVAL
July 12 at 8: In preparation for this summer's opera, Handel's little-known "Deidmaia," Will Crutchfield prepares the singers Arianna Zukerman, Maria Zifchak, and Daniel Mobbs for "Love and Death, Heaven and Hell," a program of the composer's arias given in the Spanish Courtyard. The harpsichordist Bradley Brookshire and the cellist Myron Lutzke provide some distinguished backup. ♦ July 13 at 8:30: Donald Runnicles conducts the Orchestra of St. Luke's in a concert of Mozart (the Symphonies Nos. 25 and 39) and Britten (the Serenade, featuring the tenor Paul Groves). ♦ July 14 at 4:30: The Emerson String Quartet, continuing its Northeastern swing, offers a program of Beethoven and Bartók (the Quartet No. 3). (Katonah, N.Y. 914-232-1252.)

MUSIC FESTIVAL OF THE HAMPTONS
July 12 at 8: Lukas Foss, the festival's music director, starts off the season conducting the Atlantic Chamber Orchestra in an all-Beethoven program (including the Triple Concerto and the Eighth Symphony). ♦ July 13 at 7:30: A gala concert, preceded by a reception, celebrating Foss's eightieth birthday, in which he accompanies at the piano the clarinettist Richard Stoltzman in music by Schubert, Stravinsky, Gershwin, and himself. (Snake Hollow Rd., Bridgehampton, N.Y. 800-644-4418.)

NORFOLK CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL
July 12 at 8: The pianists Boris Berman and Joan Panetti, with friends, play music by Debussy (the late chamber sonatas) and Brahms (the Horn Trio) on the composers' favorite piano, the refined, velvet-toned Bechstein. ♦ July 13 at 8: The Tokyo String Quartet begins its annual residency with a program of Mozart (with the flutist Carol Wincenc and the hornist William Purvis) and Schubert (the "Death and the Maiden" Quartet). (Routes 44 and 272, Norfolk, Conn. 860-542-3000.)

MOHAWK TRAIL CONCERTS
The festival, *tout seul,* remembers Bastille Day in "Music at Versailles: A Royal Entertainment." The flutist Christopher Kreuger, the violinist Linda Quan, and others—all playing on authentic instruments—perform a program ranging from Couperin and Rameau (the Suite from "Les Indes Galantes") to Pousseur's "Madrigal 2," a modernist provocation from 1961. (Hills Chapel, Smith College, Northampton, Mass. July 12 at 8. ♦ Federated Church, Route 2, Charlemont, Mass. July 13 at 8.) (For information about both concerts, call 888-682-6873.)

GLIMMERGLASS OPERA
July 13 at 8: Robin Guarino's production of "**Cavalleria Rusticana**" and "**Pagliacci**" (featuring Eugenie Grunewald, Keith Ikaia-Purdy, Josepha Gayer, and Brian Montgomery in the first opera and Marie Plette, John MacMaster, Ned Barth, Ray Fellman, and Nicholas Phan in the second) is the first Glimmerglass staging of the classic verist double bill in more than twenty-five years. Stewart Robertson, the company's music director, conducts. ♦ July 14 at 2: Mark Adamo's "**Little Women,**" with Jennifer Dudley, Christina Bouras, Caroline Worra, and Sandra Piques Eddy as the four March sisters; John DeMain conducts. (Cooperstown, N.Y. 607-547-2255. Through Aug. 27.)



Bright Sheng's opera "The Silver River" opens at the John Jay Theatre on July 16.

ANDREA VENTURA

MAVERICK CONCERTS
July 14 at 3: The American Quartet, with the violist Setsuko Nagata, performs Mozart's String Quintets in E-Flat Major and D Major. (Woodstock, N.Y. 845-679-8217.)

MUSIC MOUNTAIN
July 14 at 3: The outstanding young pianist Alpin Hong and some young friends, the musicians of the Avalon String Quartet, offer a program of Mozart, Beethoven (the gallant "Harp" Quartet), and Dvořák (the Piano Quintet in A Major). (Routes 63 and 126, Falls Village, Conn. 860-824-7126.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

YOU SAY YOU WANT A REVOLUTION
Now that France has weathered this spring's political storm, francophiles can breathe a bit easier and can celebrate Bastille Day in high style. The French Institute–Alliance Française marks the holiday by converting East Sixtieth Street into a tiny version of the Fifth Republic. Local servers compete for top honors in the seventh annual Les Halles Waiters Race (they have to outpace each other while balancing on one hand a tray with a glass of water on it) between Fifth and Madison Avenues. A block east, Jacques & Marie and their Paris Swing Orchestra, Dominic Kanza, and Ginette Bernard fill the afternoon with the sounds of French ballroom songs, Zairean *soukous* music, and chansons. And it wouldn't be French without great food—the stretch between Park and Lexington is filled with stands offering everything from pommes frites to petits fours. (July 14 from noon to 6. For more information, call 355-6100.)

READINGS
July 11 at 7:30: Jennifer Belle presents passages from her comic novel about the New York City real-estate market, "High Maintenance." (Barnes & Noble, Broadway at 82nd St. No tickets necessary.) ♦ July 11 at 7:30: A night of new fiction, with Melissa Pritchard reading from her short-story collection "Disappearing Ingenue"; Adam Haslett reading from his début collection of stories, "You Are Not a Stranger Here"; and Haven Kimmel reading from his first novel, "The Solace of Leaving Early." (Barnes & Noble, 4 Astor Pl. No tickets necessary.) ♦ July 12 at 7: The literary journal *McSweeney's* brings together Arthur Bradford, Ben Greenman, Lawrence Krauser, and Viggo Mortensen for an event that also features the music of One Ring Zero, a local band with a flair for circuslike melodies and homemade instruments. (Housing Works Used Book Café, 126 Crosby St. No tickets necessary.)

MOVIES OPENING

ALL ABOUT LILY CHOU-CHOU
The writer-director Shunji Iwai's drama about a group of teen-age students who create a virtual community around their infatuation with a pop singer. In Japanese. Opening July 12.

THE CROCODILE HUNTER: COLLISION COURSE
The movie début of Steve Irwin, the Australian naturalist featured on his own Animal Planet television show. Opening July 12.

HALLOWEEN: RESURRECTION
In the eighth installment of the horror series, a group of teen-agers enter a contest to spend a night in the childhood home of Michael Myers. With Busta Rhymes, Tyra Banks, and Jamie Lee Curtis. Opening July 12.

LAST DANCE
Mirra Bank directed this documentary about Maurice Sendak, the dance company Pilobolus, and their collaborative work about the Holocaust. Opening July 12. (Quad Cinema.)

MY WIFE IS AN ACTRESS
A comedy written and directed by Yvan Attal in which he plays a sportswriter who is convinced that his movie-star wife (Charlotte Gainsbourg) is cheating on him. In French. Opening July 12.

NEVER AGAIN
Two fiftysomething New Yorkers, a jazz musician (Jeffrey Tambor) and a divorcée (Jill Clayburgh), start dating after they meet in a gay bar, in a comedy directed by Eric Schaeffer. Opening July 12.

REIGN OF FIRE
An action film set in a postapocalyptic London where fire-breathing dragons have been awakened from their centuries-long slumber. With Christian Bale and Matthew McConaughey. Directed by Rob Bowman. Opening July 12.

ROAD TO PERDITION
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening July 12.

SEX AND LUCÍA
A waitress from Madrid (Paz Vega) retreats to an island after the sudden death of her boyfriend, in a magic-realist love story written and directed by Julio Medem. In Spanish. Opening July 12.

TOSCA
Benoît Jacquot directed this adaptation of the Puccini opera, with Angela Gheorghiu in the title role and Roberto Alagna as Mario Cavaradossi. In Italian. Opening July 12. (Quad Cinema.)

ZIGGY STARDUST AND THE SPIDERS FROM MARS
A digitally remastered version of D. A. Pennebaker's 1973 concert documentary about David Bowie's gender-bending alter ego. Opening July 10. (Film Forum.)

FILM NOTES

ABOUT A BOY
In this adaptation of the Nick Hornby novel, Hugh Grant's usual character, the shy and charming English bachelor, gets seriously revised into a kind of media-age Oblomov, Will Freeman, a connoisseur of pop music and old movies. Will bestirs himself only to chase girls whom he has no intention of sticking with. By degrees, this selfish layabout becomes friends with Marcus (Nicholas Hoult), an unhappy twelve-year-old boy whose mother (Toni Collette) is a seriously depressed hippie in feathers. The directors Paul and Chris Weitz—the "American Pie" brothers—have tried hard not to make a tear-jerker, and at its best the movie is knowing and tart. But the structure of the story inevitably encourages shamelessness: there's an awful scene in which Will makes a fool of himself, singing "Killing Me Softly" in a school auditorium to save Marcus from performing alone.—*David Denby* (Reviewed in our issue of 6/3/02.) (East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, 59th Street East Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, and Village Theatre VII.)

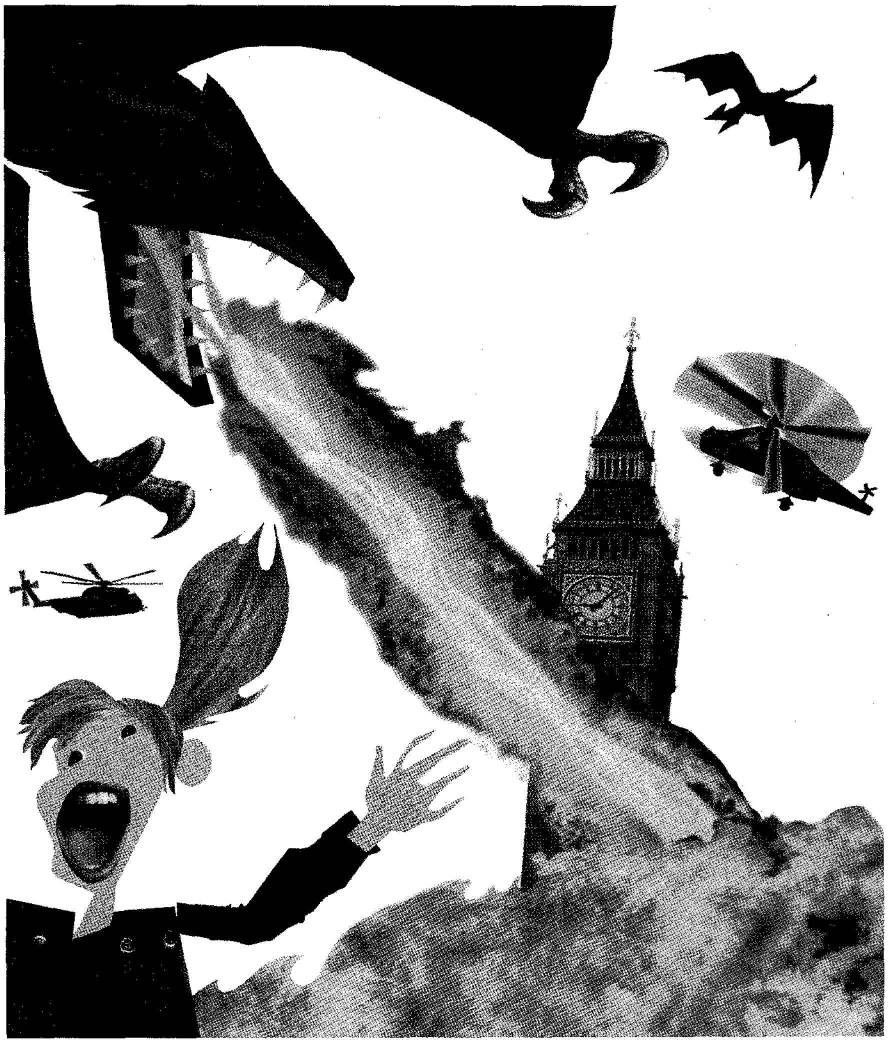
COMING ATTRACTIONS
F

THE BOURNE IDENTITY
In this latest iteration of the international thriller, two young people—an amnesiac American who possesses mysterious violent skills (Matt Damon), and a beautiful European vagabond with a taste for adventure (Franka Potente)—race across Europe to escape powerful forces eager to kill them both. Adapted by Tony Gilroy and William Blake Herron from a 1980 novel by Robert Ludlum, the picture has tons of up-to-date surveillance equipment, and it features an unfamiliar Filipino martial art called *kali,* a kind of stuttered karate (block, block, slash, kick). But the movie is still a relic of the bipolar Cold War, and suffers from a fatal lack of purpose. Great actors like Brian Cox and Clive Owen are wasted in tiny roles, and Julia Stiles, as an operative lucky enough to be assigned to Paris, is stuck in a closed room wearing headphones all the time. Directed by Doug Liman, who used to make nifty little movies like "Swingers" and "Go."—*D.D.* (6/17 & 24/02) (Battery Park 16, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, 19th Street East 6, Olympia I and II, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

THE COCKETTES
A flamboyant piece of hippie history gets its due in Bill Weber and David Weissman's loving look at the San Francisco drugs-and-drag theatre troupe. The filmmakers capture the spirit of life in a late-sixties commune as well as the Cockettes' hallucinogenic romps—performances foisted on audiences who were in the mood for wigged-out frivolity. With its archival footage and hilariously frank interviews, the movie makes for a ragtag portrait of a cultural moment when free expression reigned supreme.—*Bruce Diones* (Quad Cinema.)

DAHMER
A docudrama about the man who "tried to create living zombies" that skirts the gory side of its appalling subject. The director, David Jacobson, relies on a time-shifting narrative: Jeffrey Dahmer's life is played as a fluid moment, with his past and present coexisting in monstrous harmony. Jeremy Renner plays the serial killer, and his performance gives a disturbing depth to the well-wrought scenes of alienation, parental bullying (Bruce Davison plays Dahmer's overbearing father), and murderous gratification.—*B.D.* (Angelika Film Center.)

THE DANGEROUS LIVES OF ALTAR BOYS
Catholic boys and their comic books get a thorough going over in Peter Care's rite-of-passage pop drama. Set in the seventies, the movie concerns a group of bored classmates out for trouble. The material is played a bit somberly by its cast, which includes Kieran Culkin and, as a mean-spirited, peg-legged nun, Jodie Foster. Although the scenes are packed with predictable teen-age angst, there's an anxious snap to many of the moments, and the director's re-

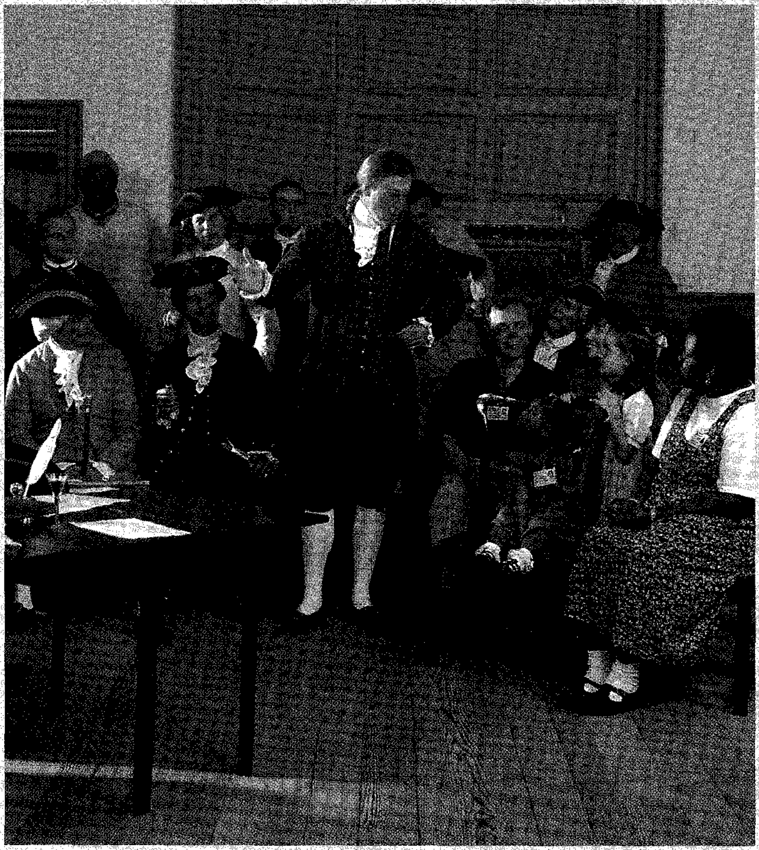


Opening July 12, Rob Bowman's "Reign of Fire."

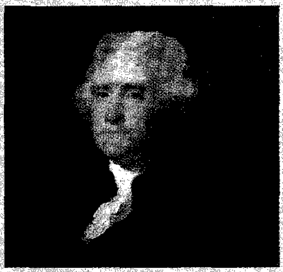
No kings. No magicians. No ladies of the lake. No singing swords.

But we did have a few knights in shining armor.

George Washington



Patrick Henry



Thomas Jefferson

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There's no evidence that Camelot actually existed in England.

◆

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flection on a more disciplined era is quietly comic. Care rounds out his story with animated sequences by Todd McFarlane; they present an Expressionist, adolescent spin on the events that helps the film overcome some of its less inspired moralizing.—*B.D.* (Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, and Sunshine Cinema.)

THE FAST RUNNER (ATANARJUAT)

A three-hour marathon of ice, snow, and raw seal meat. This Inuit epic is quite a trek, but many of the visual sequences—the Arctic in summer and winter—are sublime and unprecedented. A ten-minute episode showing the hero, Atanarjuat, running across a frozen sea has been hailed, justifiably, as a masterstroke, but there are many other discoveries, like sunshine filtering through the cracks of an igloo and the gray-on-gray polar horizon. Directed by the Inuit filmmaker Zacharias Kunuk, the movie's straight-arrow tale of murder and revenge carries it through the more tedious "Nanook of the North" moments. But even these digressions—for example, scenes that show the way the Inuit greet each other, carry themselves, and cut their food—stay with you. At the extreme north, the basic motions of life somehow seem startling and fresh. In Inuktitut.—*Michael Agger* (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Sunshine Cinema.)

FOUR BAGS FULL

This explosively funny 1956 movie, directed by Claude Autant-Lara, was known in England as "Pig Across Paris"; in the United States it was called "Four Bags Full" but was unknown under any title. Somehow it never caught on here. The period is the German Occupation: a petty, anxious black marketeer (Bourvil) hires a helper (Jean Gabin) for a night's work—transporting a slaughtered pig across Paris to a butcher in Montmartre. The helper, a famous painter who has taken on the job for the hell of it, has an uproarious night, teasing his dull companion, outwitting both the French police and the German soldiers. Bourvil was selected Best Actor at Venice for his performance, but the star of the film is Gabin, lusty and powerful as the man who enjoys life so much he can play games with it. In the middle of sordid little perils, the artist devises quick-witted solutions, and then howls with delight, "This pig's making a genius of me!" The contrast between him and the terrified, sweating fellow at his side makes you know you're watching a fable, but Autant-Lara shows class—he doesn't tie it with a ribbon and hand it to you. In French.—*Pauline Kael* (Walter Reade Theatre; July 11 and July 15-16.)

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST

An impish, sunny, and perfectly unnecessary production of the Wilde classic, directed by Oliver Parker. The Anthony Asquith version, from 1952, was stagey and artificial, which felt right for Wilde's confection. This movie is set in a "real" London of top hats, naughty music-hall girls, and primitive automobiles. Frances O'Connor, as Gwendolen Fairfax, is sexually very knowing, and gets the name Ernest tattooed on her rump. Colin Firth is a good Jack Worthing, but Rupert Everett's limited comic resources are exposed in the role of Algernon—he's arch rather than funny. Judi Dench makes the odd mistake of playing Lady Bracknell as if she were a real person, rather than the most entertaining caricature in the history of the theatre.—*D.D.* (Angelika Film Center, Chelsea Cinemas, Eastside Playhouse, Empire 25, and Lincoln Square.)

INSOMNIA

A dark and fidgety picture from Christopher Nolan, who made such a splash with "Memento." Al Pacino plays Will Dormer, a detective from Los Angeles, who is flown to the wilds of Alaska (couldn't they find anyone closer?) to unravel a nasty, intractable killing. Soon, he is fouled up in another death, which everyone hopes was accidental. Meanwhile, a local suspect (Robin Williams) shows his face, or, at any rate, gives Dormer something to run after. The ensuing chase scenes are the best thing in the film: Nolan's busy, ravenous technique has something to bite on. The rest of the movie shows what happens when a style goes in search of a mystery; the fretful power play of the two leads, like the cop's yawning sleeplessness, seems not so much grounded in character as applied like makeup. Still, Nolan's depiction of desolate backwaters is immaculate, and the women in the tale—Hilary Swank as a perky cop and Maura Tierney as the sad-faced keeper of the hotel—somehow leaven the air of contrivance.—*Anthony Lane* (5/27/02) (Battery Park 16, East 86th Street Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Sutton 1 and 2, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

STEPHEN KRONINGER

LILO & STITCH

Chris Sanders and Dean DeBlois, two of the talents behind Disney's staid Chinese-maiden movie, "Mulan," shake things up with a raucous tale of a lonely Hawaiian girl, Lilo, who befriends a mischievous critter from another planet, Stitch. With painted watercolor backgrounds and a Looney Tunes-like atmosphere, the animation has a sweet familiarity. The ugly-duckling story is laced with a delightful, frenzied humor, and the dialogue reaches beyond the usual tart pop-culture references—there are some lovely shadings to the characters. When Lilo teaches Stitch to impersonate the King, it's Elvis in Hawaii all over again.—*B.D.* (Battery Park 16, Cinema 2, East 86th Street Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

LOVELY & AMAZING

A comedy about self-dissatisfaction, featuring a mother and three daughters in Los Angeles. Jane Marks (Brenda Blethyn), the mom, undergoes liposuction and flirts with her doctor; Michelle (Catherine Keener), stuck in a loveless marriage, can't sell the little chair sculptures that she makes; Elizabeth (Emily Mortimer), an actress, thinks that she's ugly and encourages her bedmate, a narcissistic actor (Dermot Mulroney), to judge her naked body, limb by limb; Annie (Raven Goodwin), an African-American girl adopted by Jane, worries over her hair. The writer-director Nicole Holofcener has a gentle touch, though she doesn't pull her themes together as much as one would like. The movie is intelligent and funny but a little unfocussed. With James LeGros and, as Michelle's eager teen lover, Jake Gyllenhaal.—*D.D.* (Angelika Film Center, BAM Rose Cinemas, Cinema 1, and Empire 25.)

MEN IN BLACK II

Except for a few funny moments, pretty much a bore. The director Barry Sonnenfeld must have believed that the best part of the original was not its hip, mordant wit but the conventionally junky sequence at the end in which Will Smith got smacked around a lot and doused in slime. "MIIB" is mostly dull physical comedy and slapstick special effects, and it seems to have been made for unusually literal-minded children. With Tommy Lee Jones and Lara Flynn Boyle as Serleena, an evil Kylothian monster with many long tongues.—*D.D.* (7/8/02) (Battery Park 16, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, 19th Street East 6, Olympia I and II, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

METROPOLIS

H. G. Wells called this 1926 German silent "quite the silliest film"; Hitler was so impressed by the conception that many years later he tried (unsuccessfully) to persuade its director, Fritz Lang, to make Nazi movies. Lang's prophetic city of the twenty-first century (suggested by his first view of New York) has two levels: one for the rich and pleasure-loving, another—labyrinthine, underground—for the slave workers who tend the machines. One of the last examples of the imaginative—but often monstrous—grandeur of the golden period of the German film, "Metropolis" is a spectacular high point of Expressionist design (grouped human beings are used architecturally), with moments of almost incredible beauty and power (the visionary sequences about the Tower of Babel), absurd ineptitudes (the lovesick hero in his preposterous knickerbockers), and oddities that defy analysis (the robot vamp's bizarre, lewd wink). It's a wonderful, stupefying folly.—*P.K.* (Film Forum; July 12-16.)

MINORITY REPORT

A frantic return to form for Steven Spielberg, whose pulse seems to have quickened after the sluggish musings of "A.I." We are still stuck in the future, but it comes with a twist from the mazelike mind of Philip K. Dick. Tom Cruise plays John Anderton, a bright spark in the shadowy field of Precrime. With a little help from three oracles known as the Pre-Cognitives, he is able to predict, and therefore to prevent, approaching murders. The homicide rate

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AND: A calendar of *New Yorker* events across the country

has plunged, although the monitoring official from the Justice Department (Colin Farrell) looks worried about the ethics of the program. (Spielberg, like all good directors, has luck on his side; could he have known, when he began the film, that detention without trial would once again become a fiery topic?) Where "A.I." was a wandering quest, this is a straightforward chase, as Anderton finds himself accused and hunted down. Spielberg is able to flex those muscles—his ridiculous powers of suspense—that threw him so hard into the movie business in the first place. Like "Jaws," the new film is none too serious, though it is forever touching on serious things; the world it unveils may look dark, yet the plot accelerates with the lightness of comedy. With a great supporting cast, including Lois Smith, Neal McDonough, and, most startling of all, Samantha Morton as a Pre-Cog.—*A.L.* (7/1/02) (Battery Park 16, Beekman, Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Metro Twin, Murray Hill Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, and Union Square.)

THE MUMMY

When Karl Freund, the great U.F.A. cinematographer, came to the U.S. he shot both "Dracula" and "Murders in the Rue Morgue" for Universal, and then the studio offered him the chance to direct "The Mummy," in 1932. What he did was so elegant and uncommercial that he got only one other chance to direct and that was for a different studio, and in a far more obvious macabre style. "The Mummy" unnerves one because instead of fast chills there are long, quiet, ominous scenes; the lighting is so masterly and the moods are so effectively sustained that the picture gives one prickly sensations. Boris Karloff is the three-thousand-year-old mummy brought back to life, and the dark, arresting Zita Johann is the English girl whom he stalks in the streets of Cairo because she is the incarnation of the princess he loved. It's silly, but it's also disturbingly beautiful. No other horror film has ever achieved so many emotional effects by lighting; this inexpensively made film has a languorous, poetic feeling, and the eroticism that lives on under Karloff's wrinkled parchment skin is like a bad dream of undying love.—*P.K.* (Bryant Park; July 15.)

READ MY LIPS

Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (Paris.)

STAR WARS:
EPISODE II—ATTACK OF THE CLONES

The Republic? The Federation? The Separatists? The clone army? The droid army? The Siths? The Kith? The Kin? The plot is incomprehensible to anyone over fourteen, and the actors intone their starched-collar lines as if they were attending a convention of rural vicars. But, allowing for some dull moments, George Lucas's latest movie has considerable style. Digital invention is becoming grander, wilder, more free-spirited: the multi-levelled cities of the past overflow with life. It would be nice to think that Lucas's visual imagination is just now taking off.—*D.D.* (5/20/02) (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 64th and 2nd, Union Square, and Ziegfeld.)

THE SUM OF ALL FEARS

It has a female chorus—it's that important a movie. This latest in a series of super-productions devoted to Tom Clancy's fictional C.I.A. agent Jack Ryan (Ben Affleck) also features such familiar sights as mockups of the White House Situation Room, nuclear missiles rising on their launchers for takeoff, and an international cast of grimly serious actors speaking in foreign languages and dragging their subtitles from room to room. It's not the fault of the filmmakers (Paul Attanasio and Daniel Pyne wrote the script; Phil Alden Robinson directed) that actual events have overtaken the portentous clichés. But, as an evocation of danger, the movie is nowhere near serious or intelligent enough to satisfy our current sense of alarm. In a bold updating of Clancy's plot, the villains of the piece are turned into . . . Nazis.—*D.D.* (6/3/02) (Battery Park 16, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 72nd Street East, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

SUNSHINE STATE

The writer-director John Sayles will never be a natural filmmaker: he doesn't love and trust the camera enough. But this leisurely, ruminative movie about real-estate mischief and transiency in Florida has some of the most witty and large-spirited writing he's ever done for the movies and some of the best acting he's ever coaxed out of his performers. The movie chronicles the attempt of developers to take over a couple of decrepit beach towns north of Jacksonville and the ambiguous response of the locals—some fighting, some selling out. Edie Falco has the best role of her career as Marly, one of those Americans who possess more intelligence than they can use in an unsatisfactory job. Marly looks for men and makes bitter jokes that her listeners don't always understand. Angela Bassett is a failed actress who returns to the black middle-class beach town she left when she became pregnant at fifteen. The good talk swirls around these two, and the talkers include Alan King, Ralph Waite, Jane Alexander, Bill Cobbs, Mary Alice, Timothy Hutton, and Mary Steenburgen. It's a shrugging, life-goes-on movie about a state in which people pull things up by the roots, including themselves, and move forward.—*D.D.* (7/8/02) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Empire 25, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Union Square.)

Opening July 12, the Japanese cyber-pop movie "All About Lily Chou-Chou."

TOMER HANUKA

WINDTALKERS

Joe Enders (Nicolas Cage), a guilt-ridden Marine hero in the Second World War, receives a peculiar assignment: he must babysit one of the American Indians who speak a valuable battlefield code based on their Navajo language. The twist: Joe doesn't want to get close to his charge, Ben Yahzee (Adam Beach), because he might have to kill him to protect the code. In some ways the movie, directed by Hong Kong's pride, John Woo, is a standard platoon film, but some of the battle episodes, set on the island of Saipan, in 1944, are spectacular and harrowing. Woo has a weakness for slow-motion sequences, but he stages fierce moments of hand-to-hand combat, and the grouchy, hard-won, never acknowledged love between the two men is touching, even if we've seen things like it before.—*D.D.* (6/17 & 24/02) (Battery Park 16, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

ALSO PLAYING

HARVARD MAN

Cinema Village.

LIKE MIKE

Battery Park 16, Chelsea West, East 85th Street, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, and Village East Cinemas.

ME WITHOUT YOU

Angelika Film Center.

MR. DEEDS

Astor Plaza, Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Metro Twin, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.

THE POWERPUFF GIRLS MOVIE

Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 72nd Street East, 34th Street Theatre, and Village East Cinemas.

PUMPKIN

Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Square.

SPIDER-MAN (5/13/02)

Battery Park 16, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.

SONGS FROM THE SECOND FLOOR

Film Forum.

13 CONVERSATIONS ABOUT ONE THING

BAM Rose Cinemas and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

Unless noted, call 777-FILM for show times.

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn.
Battery Park 16, West St. at Vesey St.
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinemas 1, 2, and 3, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363).
East 86th Street Cinemas, Third Ave. at 86th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
Empire 25, on 42nd St. near Eighth Ave. (398-3939).
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
42nd Street E Walk, 42nd St. near Eighth Ave.
Kips Bay Theatre, Second Ave. at 32nd St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St.
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Metro Twin, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.

Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Pioneer, 155 E. 3rd St. (254-3300).
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
Sunshine Cinema, 139-143 E. Houston St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th Street Theatre, 312 W. 34th St.
Union Square, Broadway at 13th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE
35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—Through July 21: "Jack Nicholson in the Seventies." July 13 at 2: "Chinatown" (1974, Roman Polanski). ♦ July 13 at 4: "The Last Detail" (1973, Hal Ashby). ♦ July 14 at 2: "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" (1975, Milos Forman). ♦ July 14 at 4:30: "The Fortune" (1975, Mike Nichols). ♦ Repertory nights. July 13-14 at 6:30: "Arabian Nights" (1974, Pier Paolo Pasolini; in Italian).

BAM ROSE CINEMAS
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-777-3456)—Recent films from France. July 10 at 6:50, July 13 at 9:20, and July 14 at 2: "Wild Innocence" (2001, Philippe Garrel). ♦ July 10 at 9:20, July 12 at 4:30, and July 14 at 6:50: "A Hell of a Day" (2001, Marion Vernoux). ♦ July 11 at 6:50, July 13 at 2, and July 14 at 9:20: "Replay" (2000, Catherine Corsini). ♦ July 11 at 9:20, July 12 at 6:50, and July 13 at 4:30: "Mischka" (2002, Jean-François Stévenin). ♦ July 12 at 9:20, July 13 at 6:50, and July 14 at 4:30: "Roberto Succo" (2000, Cédric Kahn). ♦ Films written by Hanif Kureishi. July 15-16 at 7: "The Buddha of Suburbia" (1993, Roger Michell).

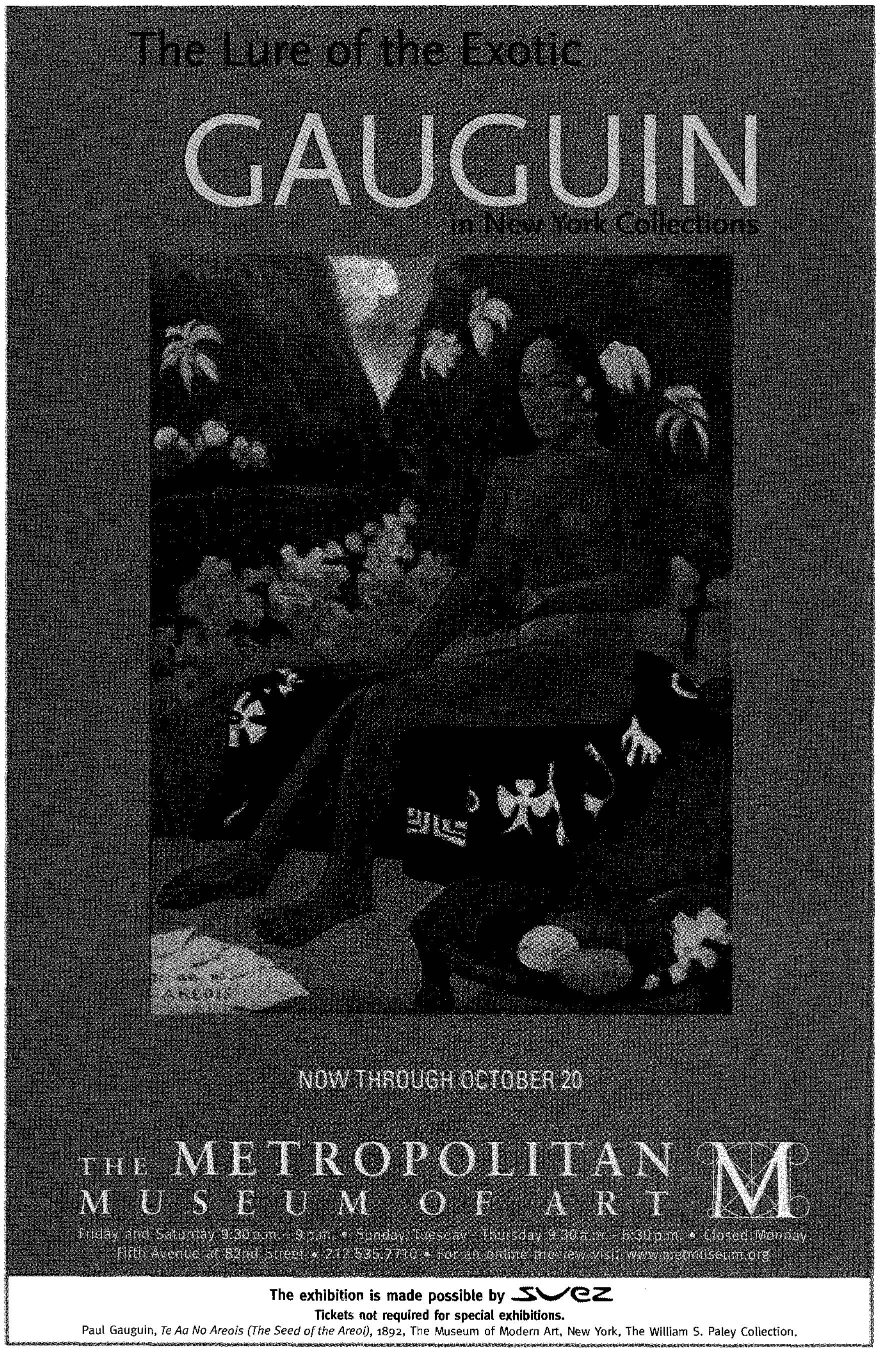
BRYANT PARK
Sixth Ave. at 42nd St. (512-5700)—Mondays, starting at dusk: free drive-in-style moviegoing. The feature on July 15 will be "The Mummy" (†).

FILM FORUM
W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—July 10-11 at 1:20, 4:40, and 8: "Rocco and His Brothers" (1960, Luchino Visconti; in Italian). ♦ Starting July 12 at 1, 3:15, 5:35, 8, and 10:15: A restored print of Fritz Lang's "Metropolis" (†).

SUNSHINE CINEMA
139-143 E. Houston St. (358-0573)—Midnight movies. July 12-13: "A Clockwork Orange" (1971, Stanley Kubrick).

THALIA THEATRE
2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (864-5400)—Classic French cinema. The 2 P.M. screenings are double features. July 13 at 2, 6:30, and 9 and July 14 at 2: "Diabolique" (1955, Henri-Georges Clouzot; in French). ♦ July 13 at 4:15 and July 14 at 4:15, 6:30, and 8:45: "Eyes Without a Face" (1959, Georges Franju; in French).

WALTER READE THEATRE
Lincoln Center (875-5600)—Through July 18: "Everybody's Star: Jean Gabin." All films are in French. July 10 at 2 and 6:30: "La Marie du Port" (1938, Marcel Carné). ♦ July 10 at 4:15 and 8:30: "En Cas de Malheur" (1958, Claude Autant-Lara). ♦ July 11 at 1, 4:45, and 8:30; July 15 at 3 and 6:45; and July 16 at 3:30: "Four Bags Full" (†). ♦ July 11 at 2:45 and 6:30; July 15 at 1, 4:45, and 8:30; and July 16 at 1:30: "Zouzou" (1934, Marc Allégret). ♦ July 12 at 2 and 6:15 and July 13 at 1, 5:10, and 9:15: "French Cancan" (1955, Renoir). ♦ July 12 at 4:15 and 8:30 and July 13 at 3:10 and 7:15: "Le Plaisir" (1951, Max Ophuls). ♦ July 14 at 1, 5:15, and 9:30: "The Cat" (1971, Pierre Granier-Deferre). ♦ July 14 at 2:50 and 7:10: "Any Number Can Win" (1963, Henri Verneuil).



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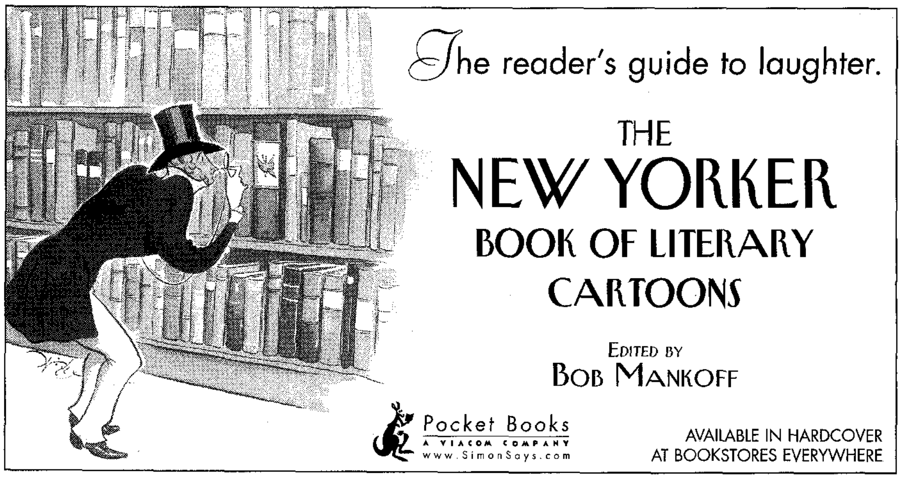

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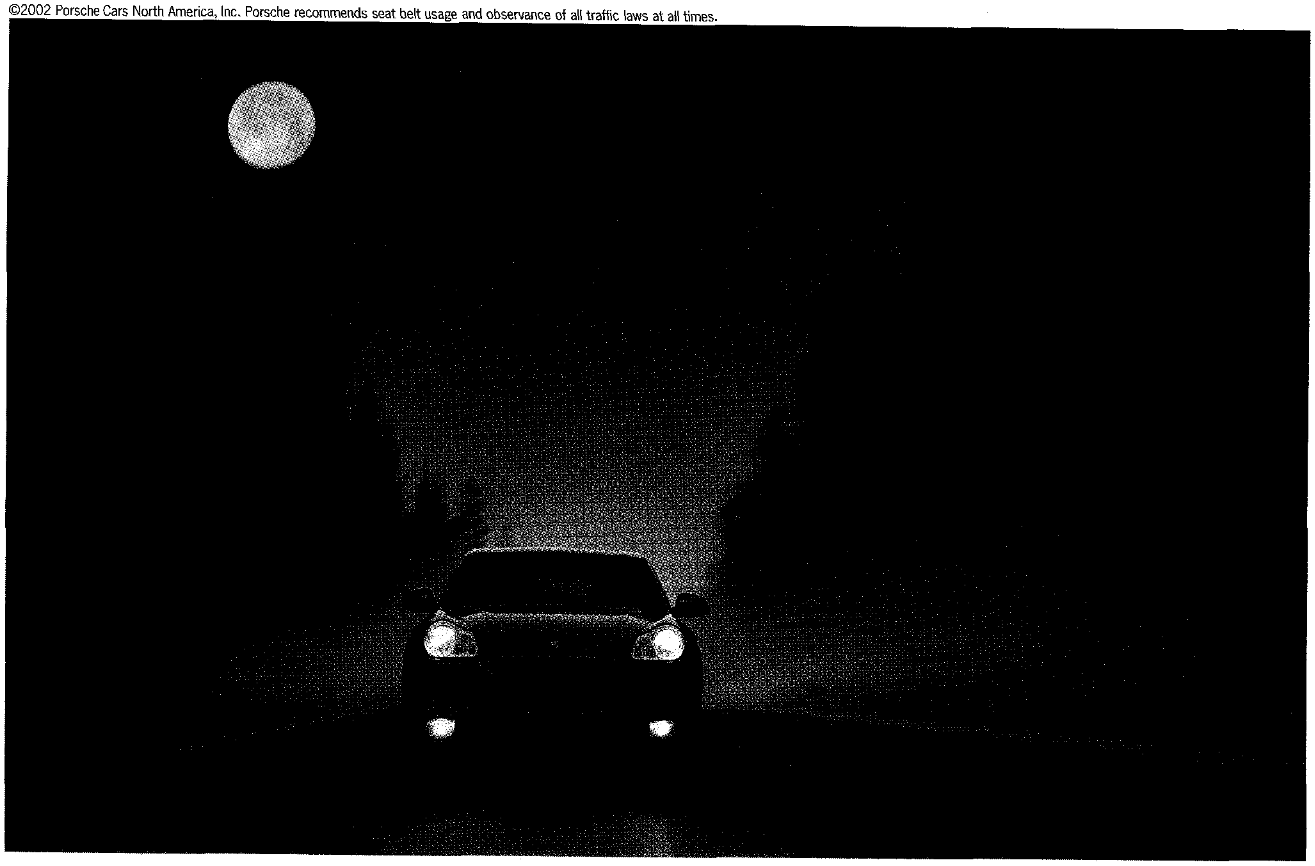

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THE
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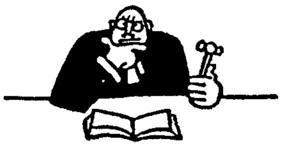
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

COMMENT
TWO LITTLE WORDS



The Pledge of Allegiance—much in the news just now, on account of a soon-to-be-overturned court decision declaring its "under God" clause unconstitutional—has a curious history, one that encapsulates many of the oddball contradictions of American life. The original author of the Pledge, one Francis Bellamy, called himself a Christian socialist. Some people might detect a contradiction right there. But in 1892, when Bellamy came up with his epic one-liner, socialism—in its main American variant, at least—was a genteel movement of reformist uplift, like temperance. Bellamy himself was a Baptist minister, and a holder of one of the most famous names in America: his first cousin was Edward Bellamy, whose utopian novel of 1888, "Looking Backward," was one of the three biggest best-sellers of the second half of the nineteenth century. (The two others were "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and "Ben-Hur.") "Looking Backward," whose mock preface is dated "December 26, 2000," envisions a future America that has peacefully evolved into a paradise of fairness, prosperity, and fraternity.

In 1891, Francis Bellamy left a Boston pulpit to work with an admirer of his, the publisher of *The Youth's Companion*, a mass-circulation family magazine devoted to instilling virtue in young people. The magazine was spearheading a campaign for patriotic observances in the schools, keyed to the quadricentennial of Columbus's voyage. Bellamy joined in with gusto. "I pledge allegiance to my flag and the republic for which it stands; one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all," published in the September 8, 1892, issue, was one of his contributions. He was thirty-seven.

The Pledge was a monster hit, thanks largely to what its principal historian, John W. Baer, has called "one of the first nationwide advertising and public relations campaigns in the United States." (Bellamy himself went on to a long and successful career as an advertising executive.) The Pledge really took off in the nineteen-twenties, when "my flag" became "the flag of the United States of America" and a coalition of citizens' groups, prominently including the Ku Klux Klan, got behind it. Millions of schoolchildren learned to recite it, accompanying the recitation with a stiff-armed, flat-palmed salute. (By 1942, for obvious reasons, the salute had been replaced with the hand-over-heart gesture that is used today.)

As a lot of people have been learning for the first time, the words "under God" weren't added until 1954, as part of a general outbreak of Cold War public piety. The campaign to stick them in was led by the Knights of Columbus, and got a big boost from President Eisenhower's Presbyterian pastor, the Reverend Dr. George M. Docherty, who sermonized that there was "something missing" in the Pledge. Without "under God," he said, "I could hear little Muscovites repeat a similar pledge to their hammer-and-sickle flag in Moscow." The change was gavelled through both Houses of Congress by voice vote without audible dissent. "Wedge issues" had not yet been invented, but politicians already knew that they had nothing to gain from quibbling about whether or not there's a God.

Thus it was that on a bright June morning in 1954 schoolchildren across the country were told that the Pledge of Allegiance would be different from then on. "One nation indivisible" was suddenly divisible—by the Supreme Being, no less. "Liberty and justice for all" was still intact, though it was unclear whether "all" now encompassed towheaded little Mas-

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

ter Atheist and pigtailed little Miss Agnostic. For some, the experience left a small residue of disillusionment with the machinations of the grownup world—not as bad as when the Dodgers moved to Los Angeles, perhaps, but a palpable addition to the stultification that, come the nineteen-sixties, would generate an opposite and more than equal reaction.

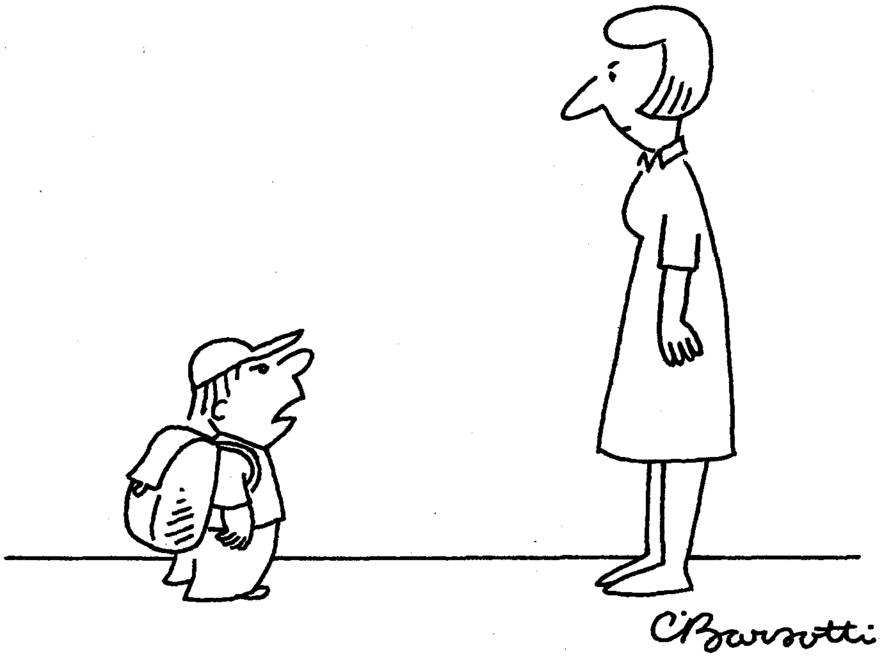
All was quiet on the Pledge front for the next third of a century. Then, in 1988, when George Bush the elder and Michael Dukakis the hapless were running against each other for President, the Pledge got weaponized. As governor of Massachusetts, Dukakis had vetoed a bill that would have forced teachers to force their pupils to recite it. By the time Bush got through with him ("What is it about the Pledge that upsets him so much?"), the Duke was well on his way to a professorship at Northeastern.

Small wonder, then, that the other day, when a three-judge panel of the federal Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, which covers eleven Western states and territories, ruled that "under God" falls afoul of the establishment-of-religion clause of the First Amendment, politicians rose as one in ostentatious wrath. The President led the way, squeezing off Bushisms. ("America is a nation that values our relationship with an Almighty." "You know, it's interesting, there is a universal God, in my opinion.") This time, the Democrats weren't about to let themselves be outpledged. "Just nuts," said Tom Daschle. Hillary Clinton pronounced herself "offended." Most egregious, the famously thoughtful Joseph Lieberman announced his eagerness to "amend the Constitution" so as to "make clear" that "we are one nation because of our faith in God."

Technically, the court's ruling was probably O.K. But the harm caused by those two words has not been serious—and it's nothing compared with the potential harm of poking this particular beehive with a stick. The only service performed by the court was the wholly redundant one of exposing the politician class in full pander mode. Anyway, all that Congress was doing this time was trying to keep something that has acquired the sheen of tradition from being taken out. It wasn't trying to shoehorn something in to suit the political panic of the moment. (After "under God," insert "and we don't mean Allah.")

Finally, W.W.F.B.D.? What would Francis Bellamy do? He wouldn't have liked the politics behind "under God," but the phrase itself probably wouldn't have bothered him. In his own speech at the ceremony where the Pledge was introduced, Bellamy praised the public schools as "the masterforce which, under God, has been informing each of our generations with the peculiar truths of Americanism." As an editor and rhetorician, though, Bellamy would notice that the phrase has been inserted in the wrong place. It should be "one nation indivisible, under God." As is, it sounds as if it's God that's indivisible (which would be news to the Trinitarians among us). Also, the flow would be better. For a white guy from Boston, Bellamy had a pretty good sense of rhythm.

—*Hendrik Hertzberg*



"I'm taking my voucher and going to circus school."

ODD BALL
LEAGUES OF NATIONS

Every World Cup brings new pleasures, at least for those of us who sit on this side of the world. Back in 1982, when the Cup was broadcast on TV almost exclusively in Spanish, there was the joy of sound. If you weren't a Spanish speaker, you still got the meaning of things, not just from the images but from the announcer Tony Tirado's melodramatic, infinitely tunable voice: soft, soft, soft and then rushed, a quizzical canitbehappeningatlast? and suddenly *loud* and then a pained exclamation and then, occasionally—O.K., very occasionally—ecstatic, with his unforgettable melisma of "Goal." Anyone who didn't get soccer at least got the erotics of it: the long buildup, the big explosion.

This year, we had the pleasure of silence. Though most of the games were broadcast in English, they were broadcast in the middle of the night or very early in the morning. If, like some of us, you had the television in the bedroom, the trick was to turn it on noiselessly, pivoting the TV trolley so that the blue glow avoided a spouse's sleeping eyes, and then to enjoy the drama in silence: the crowds, the suffering, even your own muted exaltation. The best part was the absence of spin. When the English goaltender David Seaman made a fatal mistake during a Brazilian free kick, you didn't know what the consensus of opinion was: had he been outwitted or was he just plain dumb? You had to decide for yourself. It was like watching the Presidential debates on C-SPAN, with nobody around to analyze.

The other thing this year's World Cup taught, or retaught, was how insular Americans are about sports. We are to sports what Australia is to animals: we have all the weird stuff, and we think it's normal. Football, our football, is our Tasmanian devil, baseball our kangaroo, hockey our koala. Despite the success of Team U.S.A., it was pretty clear that no one here cared—really cared, the way we care about NASCAR or the Masters. This is strange. At a time when even George W. has decided that there is a world out there after all—though you want to watch out for showoff stuff like actually speaking other languages (Imagine! people speaking French in France to the French President)—we remain stubbornly insular about the games we like to watch and play.

Some ink has been spilled arguing about whether we ought to care or not—though the idea of attaching the words "ought" and "care" to watching sports will strike many people, including would-be sleepers shielding their eyes from the blue glare of an insufficiently pivoted television at 3 A.M., as ridiculous. But the plain truth is that we don't and, probably, won't.

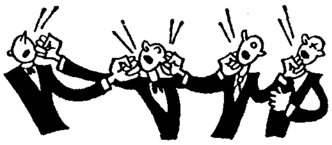
Yet two things haunt us as we watch. First, it is not merely that our games are better spectacles; it is that they are only, or primarily, spectacles. Few Americans who watch these games play them. We play specially designed, domesticated versions—*soft*ball, *touch* football. Baseball—real hardball—is rarely played by people past the age of twelve; tackle football is the memory of a hobbled minority; and ice hockey remains, at best, the pastime of a frostbitten few. Among our sports, only basketball is a true game and a big game—and the big game is different from the true game, chiefly because to play it you have to be very, very big. We have chosen games that are uniquely well adapted to spectacle and, perhaps as a consequence, maladapted to participation.

For the rest of the world, part of the pleasure of watching soccer, or world football, as we should call it, is knowing there is a parabola that takes in the kids in the dusty barrio right through to Ronaldo and Ronaldinho: it is the same game, cheap and easy to play, whether you are playing it poorly or sublimely well. A parabola connects American dads and sons playing catch in the back yard to Barry Bonds—but it is an American arc, with money, glamour, and lots of high-tech gear transforming it along the way, until the colors at the end of the rainbow bear little resemblance to those at the beginning.

The real oddity is not that Americans don't like soccer; it's that we have so little appetite for testing ourselves against the world in the sports we do like. Even in basketball, when, in the Olympics, we play the world, we end up playing the memory of our own previous teams. We are as good as Brazil, Germany, England, Italy, and France, all at once. Part of the pleasure of our Olympic victories has lain in our unquestioned supremacy, as though we preferred easy victories to good games. But, to make a modest proposal, what would be more fun than to give the World Series actual meaning, and invite the world in to play it with us? Or, rather, to ask the world, or at least Ichiro Suzuki and Sammy Sosa, to step outside for a moment, so that we could invite them back in to play against us? When will we have a World Series of Baseball, to show what a real world tournament might be like in a game we do care about? The Japanese, the Cubans, even the Canadians, for goodness' sake. And the Dominicans! Imagine a team with A. Rod, Sosa, Pedro Martínez, and Vladimir Guerrero, and Felipe Alou to manage—it would be the Brazil of baseball. It would be fun to see, and we would learn a lot, and, who knows, we would probably win and we might even lose. Some of us might even choose to tape the games and watch them, silently, in the middle of the night.

—*Adam Gopnik*

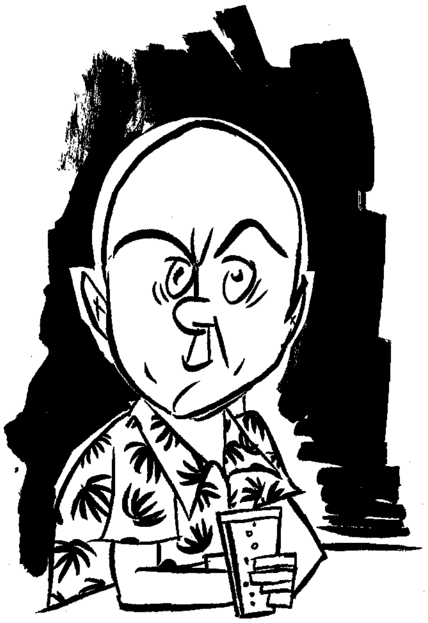
VISITING DIGNITARIES ON THE PISH



Irvine Welsh, the Scottish novelist, was in town recently to read from his new book, "Porno," which is due out in the fall. "Porno" is the sequel to "Trainspotting," Welsh's first novel, and, like "Trainspotting," "Porno" is not merely set in the drug-infested schemes and public houses of Edinburgh but written in its Port o' Leith dialect; sometimes ye cannae hardly feckin understan a word ay it.

"Ah've no been tae bed yet. This is Thursday night, aye?" Welsh, who is forty-three, had arrived in New York almost twenty-four hours earlier, with three of his old mates. They had known one another for yonks—since they were teen-age hooligans. Now, having already consumed a great deal of bevvy, Welsh was wearing a short-sleeved Hawaiian shirt and drinking Heinekens in a booth at Rudy's, a bar on Ninth Avenue.

"Hell's Kitchen, it's a good neighborhood, isnae't?" Welsh said, rubbing his cue-ball-bald head. "One ay the few good uns. It's still becomin yuppified n gentrified, bit eh's one ay the last sortay bastions."



Irvine Welsh

"Ahh, it's nice," Deano shouted from across the booth. Deano is big and square-jawed, and he was unshaven and wearing a black T-shirt. He is not a writer. "Ah'm a glazier. Tha's whit ah do. N ah drink a lot. Ah like drunks." The thickness of Deano's accent was compounded by the fact that he was more than a little bit pished, rat-arsed, steamboats. Deano also hadn't been to sleep—"Ye woudnae slept ayther if ye saw wot wis i' the bed"—and he was now proclaiming himself the "last mate standing."

The two others, George and Jimmy, had recently "fallen by the wayside," Welsh said, and returned to the foursome's hotel room, down on Rivington Street, to pass out. The Lower East Side is another bastion, "a dive," according to Welsh.

"Wi feel right a home," Deano said. "It's oor kind oaf place: seedy, dangerous."

"Horrible," Welsh said. "N tha's jist Jimmy." It was Jimmy's first time in New York. In the seventies, he was one of the best skateboarders in Edinburgh. Farmer Jim, they called him. Now he had a couple of extra Mars bars on the coupon, and he was Fat Jimmy. Earlier in the afternoon, Welsh had taken him to see Times Square—"n he goes, 'Get a picture, get a picture ay me.'" Welsh told him, "'Donnae be such a feckin tourist, Jim.'"

"He actually slept," Deano said. "Ah've goat no sympathy for im. Thaire gaunny suffer whin ah git home tonight. They are gaunny suffer. Thir's a sex shoap jist a coupla doors up. Ah wis looking a the bondage gear. Ah'm gaunny buy a little PVC miniskirt n give it tae Jimmy n get a photograph ay him wi it."

Big George was in for trouble as well. "George hus made emsel a target by gaun home early," Deano said. "If ah wint home early, ah wid expect tae be abused."

"It's fatal tae do tha," Welsh said. "Likesay, ye cannae do tha. Ye cannae go home."

"If ah'd gone home passed oot, thir's nae rules. Thir's nae limits tae whit people will do tae ye while ye sleep."

Deano excused himself to visit the slasher, and Welsh rubbed his head again. He said he'd been busy lately. A few weeks ago, he went to Afghanistan, where he saw a couple of men tossing stones at women wearing burkhas. "The women are really marginalized there," he said. "They huv goat tae be covered oap." Before that, Welsh had been invited to the Queen's Jubilee, at Buckingham Palace, but he didn't go. For one thing, Ozzy Osbourne was performing. "Ozzy's a wanker," he said. "He sums up wha's crap aboot rock n roll." Still, Welsh was pleased to have got an invitation. "It's nice she's thinkin oaf me," he said.

Deano returned, and Welsh said, "Ah'm a wee worried aboot Jimmy. Ah gaive im the address ay the hotel, bit he's nivir been tae New York."

Deano shrugged. "Las git ootay ere."

—*Ben McGrath*

ABOUT TIME DEPT.

BLIND TOM'S TOMBSTONE

One of the more unusual deliveries made last week to the Evergreens Cemetery, in East New York, came in a truck from Steinway & Sons. The piano—an ebony grand—was set up on a square of AstroTurf under a tent in the cemetery's Pleasant Hill section. Nearby, a small, festively dressed crowd gathered around a granite tombstone—also freshly delivered—commemorating the death, ninety-four years ago, of Thomas Greene Wiggins.

Wiggins, who played the piano under the stage name Blind Tom, was in his day among the most successful entertainers in America. He routinely sold out houses from the Brooklyn Atheneum to the Denver Opera House, and in 1860 he gave a performance at the White House for President Buchanan. At his peak, he earned somewhere between fifty and a hundred thousand dollars a year—in eighteen-seventies money. Yet Wiggins himself received almost none of this. Born blind, and possibly autistic, he spent the early part of his life in slavery and the latter part essentially indentured, first to his former master, then to his master's son, and, finally, to his master's son's widow. During the Civil War, many of the proceeds of his concerts went to benefit the sick and the wounded of the Confederate Army.

Wiggins was possessed of a phenomenal musical memory and was said to be able to perform some seven thousand piano compositions. His concerts nearly always featured a challenge in which a member of the audience was invited to the stage to play anything he liked, preferably an original work. No matter what it was, Wiggins, who was also known for his odd grunting and contortions onstage, would play it right back, fumbles and all. (Mark Twain, a Blind Tom fan, once referred to him as an "inspired idiot.") In addition, Wiggins was capable of extraordinary feats of musical dexterity. At an 1865 concert in Philadelphia, for example, he astonished the crowd by playing "Fisher's Hornpipe" in C major with his right hand and "Yankee Doodle" in D major with his left, even as he sang "Tramp! Tramp! Tramp!" in C-sharp major. By the time of his death, in 1908, he was no longer performing (though several Blind Tom impostors were plying the vaudeville circuit), and, owing to either indifference or parsimoniousness, he was buried at the Evergreens in an unmarked grave.

The group that congregated around Wiggins's new tombstone last week consisted mostly of the great, great-great, and great-great-great grandchildren of his half sister, Matilda. Though several members of the family live in Brooklyn, none of them realized that Wiggins was buried there until two years ago, when they read about the work of a pianist, John Davis, who was researching Wiggins's life, and who had recently recorded a CD of his music. (Wiggins published several dozen works of his own, the most distinctive of which imitate the sounds of rainstorms, sewing machines, cannon fire, and locomotives.) At the gravesite, Davis, who also happens to live in Brooklyn, played Wiggins's "Rêve Charmant," a nocturne in D-flat major.

The minister officiating at the ceremony confessed at the outset that he was unsure of the proper protocol for the situation. "I've never done this before," he said. "And I've spoken to other ministers and they, too, have never done this before, so we will go along with God's help." After reading some lines from the Bible—"A thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is passed"—he asked for remarks from the family. Emma Jefferson, a great-great niece of Wiggins's, who is eighty-six and lives in Decatur, Georgia, volunteered: "I am glad that I lived long enough to see recognition given to my uncle." Everyone sang, not altogether in tune, "O God, Our Help in Ages Past." When the service was over, some cemetery workers perched nearby on gravestones applauded.

At Wiggins's original interment, there was some disagreement about who was actually being buried. According to the obituary in the *Times*, several mourners at the funeral home said they did not believe that the body in the casket was really Blind Tom's, and this argument was still going on as the casket was being carried off to the Evergreens. The talk following last week's ceremony was more upbeat—at least, one injustice that had been done was being righted. Still, there was an unavoidable sense that it had taken an awfully long time. Before dispersing, the family members took turns photographing one another next to the tombstone, while a crew from Steinway began to pack up the piano. "It's happy and at the same time it's really very sad," Olivia Jackson, one of Wiggins's great-great-great nieces, said. "It's been a long journey."

—*Elizabeth Kolbert*

THE FINANCIAL PAGE

L'AFFAIRE MESSIER

Two years ago, Jean-Marie Messier was the new face of European business. As the C.E.O. of Vivendi Universal, he had transformed a French water company into a global media powerhouse by investing heavily in the Internet and wireless and spending thirty-four billion dollars to acquire the Seagram Company, with all its television, film, and music divisions. In the process, Messier promoted himself as a thoroughly Americanized leader, devoted to the bottom line and to the demolition of what he called "France Inc."

Instead, France Inc. demolished him. The prices that he had paid for Vivendi's media properties looked ludicrous in the wake of the stock-market collapse. His plans to make Vivendi "a multi-platform" giant fell apart when the wireless business stalled. After he moved to New York, last September, his praise for the city and his disdain for many things French (at one point, he called France "a small exotic country") offended his countrymen. And when Vivendi's stock price went into a spiral Messier offered no persuasive turnaround plan. Meanwhile, the American model of capitalism that he was pushing seemed tainted by a sagging stock market and a rash of accounting scandals. Detractors on both sides of the Atlantic called for his head, and finally, last week, they got it.

Vivendi's performance in recent years has been mediocre, it's true, and the company is weighed down with many billions in debt. But the same can be said of plenty of corporations whose C.E.O.s still have their Town Cars. For all the braying, Vivendi has done better lately than Disney or AOL Time Warner. Why, then, was Messier the one carted off in a tumbrel?

We tend to believe that the world is ruled these days by deracinated global corporations that float above all ethnic and national ties. The French certainly like to think so, if only because it gives them another cabal to fret over. But, as *l'affaire Messier* has demonstrated, corporations are still national in character. In every regard, from management style and compensation to corporate strategy, they're as characteristic of their home countries as meat cuts and movies.

Whatever Messier's ambitions, Vivendi was a French company at its core, and his avowals of affection for the American way of life and business did little to change that in a country so adamantly fearful of *le Big Mac-ification*. In April, when Messier fired the head of Canal Plus, which funds virtually all French films, he provoked a national outcry, led by, among others, Juliette Binoche and Catherine Deneuve. It didn't seem to matter that Canal Plus had lost four hundred million dollars the year before: Messier was charged with the high crime of philistinism. "To consider works of art and cultural goods ordinary merchandise is a profound mental aberration that nothing can justify," President Jacques Chirac declared.

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

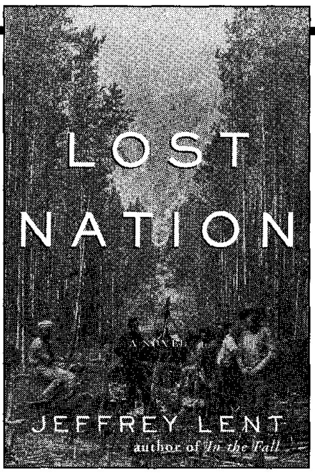
Even more important, Messier's crusade was ill-suited to the French way of doing business. France's economy enjoyed its greatest boom in the years after the Second World War, when the state, and not the market, was effectively directing corporate strategy. As a result, the French do not see the market as the sole determinant of value. Go to work for Carrefour, the French retail giant, and you'll soon discover that it's no Wal-Mart. In one survey of fifteen thousand executives, just sixteen per cent of French managers said that profit should be the only goal of a corporation. French labor markets are far less flexible than those in the U.S., and organizations tend to be more hierarchical and stable. Nor do the French have much time for the idea of creative destruction that we claim to venerate. When the sociologist Geert Hofstede conducted a survey of more than fifty thousand I.B.M. employees, he found that French workers had a very low tolerance for risk and uncertainty; rapid change was a bête noire.

France has taken on some American tendencies in recent years, thanks to global competition and rising foreign investment. Renault and Peugeot have been restructured. Air France and France Telecom have been partially privatized. But such changes have come slowly—and quietly, as French leaders have sought to downplay them. Messier, by contrast, liked to play up the drama of Vivendi's transformation, to stick it in the face of a reluctant nation. He made even sound strategy seem unpalatable.

By the end of his tenure, Messier had alienated not only his native country but his adopted one as well. The initial impetus for his ouster came from the Bronfman family, which, after the Seagram deal, had become Vivendi's largest shareholder. The Bronfmans (they are Canadian, but in business and in figure skating Canadians are Americans, too) could not have cared less about Messier's alleged philistinism. They just didn't like his *Vivendi, c'est moi* rhetoric and their dwindling stock price. In fact, analysts spoke of a *décote Messier*—a Messier discount—meaning that Vivendi was worth less with Messier in charge. The only real French-American bonding at Vivendi was among the directors who decided to remove him.

Still, there was some poetic justice to Messier's ouster. His self-regard was so aggressive—his nickname was Jean-Marie Messier, Moi-Même Maître du Monde—that any referendum on the company's performance became a referendum on him. At most French companies, the C.E.O. job is like a sinecure. But, thanks to Messier, Vivendi adopted a more American approach: if you underperform, you're out. In this respect, Messier did succeed in remaking Vivendi—at least, enough to get himself canned.

—*James Surowiecki*



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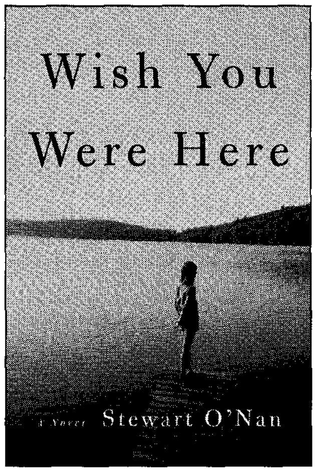

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THE SPORTING SCENE

WE ARE THE WORLD

Soccer changes its face.

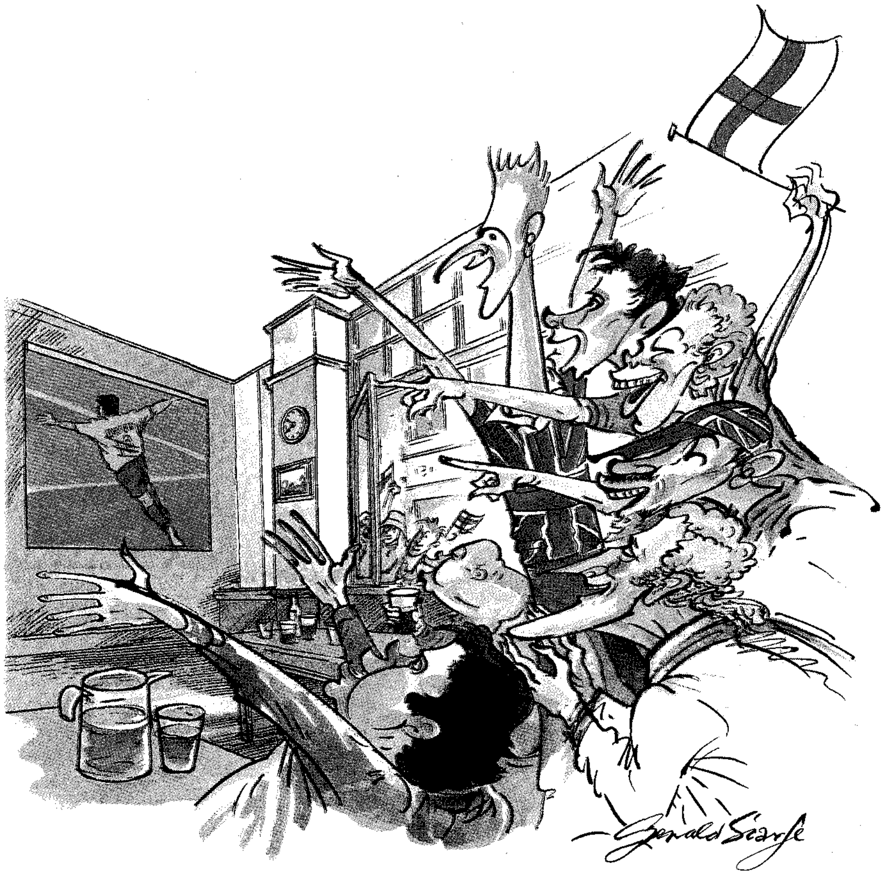
BY NICK HORNBY

The last goal in the 1998 World Cup was scored by Emmanuel Petit, a blond, muscular, ponytailed, and irritatingly good-looking midfielder for the host nation, France. It was France's third goal in an improbably easy 3-0 victory over the perennial favorite, Brazil. Petit, like several of his compatriots, played his club football in England, with the London team Arsenal (the national teams pick the very best club players, no matter where they earn a living), and, just weeks before the Brazil game, Arsenal had won the English championship and the Football Association Cup. Petit now had a World Cup winners' medal, football's biggest prize, to add to his haul. A few days after parading through the streets of Paris on an open-topped bus in front of hundreds of thousands of his adoring countrymen, he wandered into a casino and won more than twenty thousand dollars on a one-armed bandit. Looks, talent, money, and freakish good fortune—no wonder so many schoolboys aspire to be footballers, when players like Petit seem to live out every schoolboy's dream.

The first goal in the 2002 World Cup was scored by Papa Bouba Diop, of Senegal, against France, after Petit unintentionally and inelegantly bounced the ball off his own goalkeeper to present Diop with an easy opportunity. It was the only goal of the game: the French team, the favorite to retain the Cup, was almost comically inept, not only in that match but in two subsequent matches, against Uruguay and Denmark, and it went home a couple of weeks earlier than expected, without having scored even once, despite the presence of top strikers from the English, Italian, and French leagues in its squad. (It would be gratifying to report that Petit had also put on sixty pounds and developed a severe case of acne in the four years since his victory, but life isn't quite that neat.)

France's loss to Senegal contained a narrative that was to be repeated over and over during the 2002 competition: a player of whom very few people had ever heard, representing a country of which nothing was expected, embarrassing a team stuffed with Nike-ad superstars. The U.S.A. team scored three times in an astounding opening forty minutes against Portugal, another favorite; both Italy and Spain were knocked out by the eventual semifinalist South Korea, which before this tournament hadn't won a game in fourteen attempts; Argentina, like France, didn't even make it as far as the second round of the competition. The biggest names in football, almost all the players whose faces were chosen to represent the event in TV promotions and on advertising hoardings—Luis Figo, of Portugal; Raúl, of Spain; Francesco Totti, Christian Vieri, and Paolo Maldini, of Italy; Gabriel Batistuta and Juan Veron, of Argentina; Thierry Henry, David Trezeguet, and Zinedine Zidane, of France—were able to watch the semifinals on their own giant plasma TV screens at home, if they still had the stomach for the sport. The wheel of fortune had clearly spun away from Petit and his multimillionaire colleagues; whether it had moved of its own accord or someone had helped it on its way with a hearty shove and a palmful of grease eventually became a subject of animated and occasionally paranoid debate.

It is mostly pointless, I know, to try to convince an American readership of the joys of football (yes, football), but it would be hard for anyone not to take pleasure in the rhythm of life in a football-mad country during the World Cup. In London, over the past month, friends gathered at lunchtime on workdays; children arrived at school two hours early in order to watch breakfast-time games with their classmates; TV screens suddenly appeared in offices. Even the inconvenience of having to turn a newspaper over to get to the sports pages was removed: the national team's exploits were on every front page. (The time difference between England and the two host nations, Japan and South Korea—which meant that a couple of England's games kicked off at 7:30 A.M. here—tested the ingenuity even of Britain's notoriously ingenious tabloid editors, aware that most of their readers wouldn't bother picking up a paper until the game was over. On the morning of England's game with Brazil, the cover of the *Daily Mirror* showed only the flag of St. George—England's official flag—and the caption "This page is cancelled. Nothing else matters." It is not unpleasant to live, if only for a moment, in a world where this kind of sentiment is permissible.) We watched in the millions. And not only did we watch together, in pubs and in work canteens and, for the first time, outdoors, on giant screens erected in public places, we also watched ourselves watching together. Every live broadcast was punctuated by reaction shots of the crowds in Trafalgar Square, or the troops in Afghanistan, or the kids at a certain player's old school—as if we had a neurotic need to be convinced that we weren't the only idiots who had set our alarms in order to shout obscenities at the linesmen. My new wide-screen TV having been deemed of tournament standard, my living room became an official venue for all of England's games. I cannot recall having seen a male friend at 7 A.M. since the Allman Brothers played the Knebworth Festival, in 1974, and it may well be another twenty-eight years before I choose to do so again.



A victory over Argentina convinced us that the whole thing had been a triumph.

GERALD SCARFE

In England, the mood was uncomplicatedly and cheerfully patriotic, and this lack of ambiguity was something of a surprise: the grotesque behavior of our fans in the past, especially during international tournaments, has made many people feel ambivalent about the national team. But in Japan and Korea the English behaved impeccably (possibly because the Far East is a long way to go to punch a Swede), leaving us with less than usual to feel ashamed of. The flag of St. George had hitherto been more commonly seen stretched over the beer belly of a National Front voter walking a pit bull than fluttering from the window of a family hatchback—no one else wanted to touch it once the hooligans and the Fascists started using it to illustrate their (white) Englishness—but over the past month the red cross has been everywhere. (The Union Jack is the British flag, and therefore isn't used for football tournaments, in which Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland each enter their own teams. Unfortunately, these teams were even worse than England's, and none of them qualified for the World Cup finals.) The ubiquity of the flag of St. George has even prompted a cautiously optimistic political debate about the possibility of wresting it away from the racists—one of the few times in the past thirty years that our football team has inspired anything other than gloomy introspection and self-loathing. The English team was its usual mediocre self: we made it only as far as the quarter-finals. But a victory over our deadly enemy Argentina along the way was enough to convince many of us that—despite a couple of the results, two or three tepid performances, and our failure to win the trophy—the whole thing had been a stupendous triumph.

At the same time, however, there was anecdotal evidence that the very young don't feel the same national pull as their parents. Football in England has changed over the past ten years: almost all the best players in our domestic league—and, indeed, many of the worst—come from overseas, and children who enjoy the sport are not suddenly going to switch allegiance from their favorite players just because they play for a different country during the World Cup. Two thoroughly English sons of friends of mine were unshakably Swedish in their sympathies, because of their devotion to the midfielder Freddie Ljungberg (Ljungberg's secret, somewhat depressingly, seems to be the child-friendly red stripe in his hair), and they were both devastated when Sweden went out to Senegal. Neither of them seemed very bothered about England. And there is a strong argument that our new familiarity with players from every corner of the globe has lessened the impact of the tournament generally. It is hard to imagine a more exotic tie than the one between Costa Rica and China, but the key contest in that match was between the Manchester City center-forward Paulo Wanchope and the Dundee and former Crystal Palace center-back Fan Zhiyi. Manchester City versus Crystal Palace we can get at home, thank you very much.

Club football may have spoiled our appetite, but it has also, in all senses of the word, spoiled the players. It used to be the aspiration of every professional footballer to play in the World Cup, but this time around there was a growing sense that, for some of the wealthiest—especially those who didn't have the good fortune to play for one of the stronger footballing nations—it was an unattractive alternative to a well-earned beach holiday. The midfielder Roy Keane, whose club side, Manchester United, is significantly better than his international side, Ireland, reportedly told his national coach, Mick McCarthy, "You are a crap manager . . . and you're not even Irish, you English cunt. You can stick it up your bollocks." (Maybe Keane was simply troubled that McCarthy was, as far as we know, the only hermaphrodite coach at the World Cup.) "I can buy you, your house, and your family," Zlatko Zahovic, of Slovenia, told his manager. "You were a dickhead player and you're the same as a coach." The coaches concerned, clearly having decided that their star players were not going to be much fun in the squad bingo sessions, sent Keane and Zahovic home.

Most of the stars who did turn up were either exhausted or injured. Zidane, arguably the best player in the world, sat out France's first two games and made only a sad, tired contribution in the third; David Beckham, of England, attempted to play just weeks after breaking a bone in his foot and, though he was considerably better than you or I might have been in similar circumstances, he was far below his best; the formerly astounding Ronaldo, of Brazil, was merely brilliant, having undergone years of debilitating surgery. Several key players—Robert Pires, of France; Steven Gerrard, of England; Sebastian Deisler, of Germany—didn't make it on the plane to Asia in the first place. (If it has achieved nothing else, the 2002 tournament has finally demonstrated to the Fédération Internationale de Football Association, or FIFA, football's world governing body, that the best players play too many competitive games and get kicked much too often.) What we were left with was what the Oscars would be like if Hollywood forgot to fill out the nomination forms: however often you told yourself that it was good to see so many Belgian actors and Taiwanese directors up for awards, you'd still end up itching for a glimpse of Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg. The World Cup is about stars, and this time around many of the stars either didn't show up or left well before the prizes were presented.

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J. Harris

The best and most engrossing story of the competition was the sensational progress of South Korea, and the scenes of pandemonium that greeted each victory. Korea began the group stage, in which four teams play one another on a league basis, with a 2–0 win over a peculiarly lacklustre Poland, and finished it by beating the group favorite, Portugal, 1–0. The team's qualification from a relatively weak group—which, in addition to no-hopers Poland, also included the inexperienced and unrated United States—was moderately surprising. But it looked, at first, as though Korea had been too successful for its own good: by winning the group outright, it only succeeded in earning itself a game against Italy, which had unexpectedly lost to Croatia and crept through its group in second place, after a nervy 1–1 draw with Mexico.

The Italians have always had a strange approach to football. Their players look like pop stars, and the squad almost always includes at least two forwards whom every other country in the world would kill for; all the outward signs suggest flamboyance and a sense of stylish adventure. But traditionally they play a stupefyingly defensive game, as if too much scoring would somehow cause people to doubt their masculinity. The Italian way is to score once, and then refuse to cross the halfway line for the remainder of the game. Against the Koreans, Italy duly scored its goal, and then contented itself by preventing the enthusiastic but unseasoned host nation from playing. With a couple of minutes left, however, a defensive mistake gave the Koreans an equalizer; even then, with just seconds remaining, the Italian striker Christian Vieri was presented with an unmissable chance to settle the match. He missed. At this stage, the Italians had no one to blame but themselves; however, in the extra-time "golden goal" period (in which the game ends as soon as anyone scores), a couple of bad decisions persuaded them that they could blame the referee and his assistants instead. A goal was disallowed because of a bad offside decision, and then Francesco Totti, one of the pinup boys of Italian football, was shown a red card for what has become known, in this World Cup, as "simulation": in the opinion of the referee, he had purposely taken a dive in an attempt to win himself what would have been a decisive penalty. It was certainly an unkind interpretation of the Italian's fall. Then, just when it seemed as though the tie would have to be decided by the banality of a penalty shoot-out, the Korean striker Ahn Jung Hwan headed a last-gasp winner. Amusingly, Ahn had been playing his club football in Perugia, Italy, with apparently very little distinction.

It is perhaps worth pointing out that *C'est la vie* is a French expression, and that stiff upper lips are most commonly associated with the British Isles. The Italians went stereotypically nuts. The FIFA e-mail system crashed after receiving an estimated four hundred thousand enraged messages about the refereeing decisions. Franco Frattini, the Italian minister for public offices, described the referee as "a disgrace, absolutely scandalous." He went on, "I've never seen a game like it. It seemed as if they just sat around a table and decided to throw us out." An official statement from RAI television, which reportedly considered suing FIFA for lost revenue, called the decisions "so blatant they could only be described as the product of serious fraud." The referee in question, Byron Moreno, of Ecuador, perhaps unwisely decided to snipe back. He suggested in effect that the accusations of bribery were a bit rich, coming as they did from a country not unfamiliar with the concept of the backhander. The Rome prosecutor's office, reacting to a complaint from an Italian consumer association, promptly opened an investigation into Moreno's conduct. TV stations, prosecutors, government ministers . . . at one stage it seemed only a matter of time before a small flotilla of Italian gunships would set sail across the Atlantic, to prepare the way for a full-scale invasion of Ecuador.

Just when we non-Italians had begun to wonder whether our ribs could take any further punishment, along came Luciano Gaucci, the president of the Perugia football club and therefore Ahn Jung Hwan's boss, to add to the gaiety of nations. Gaucci announced that Ahn was fired. "That gentleman will never set foot in Perugia again," Gaucci said. "I have no intention of paying a salary to someone who has ruined Italian soccer." Whether sacking a striker for scoring a goal is strictly in accordance with European employment law remains to be seen, and in any case a Perugia spokesman swiftly distanced the club from Signor Gaucci's remarks. At the time of writing, Ahn's future career plans are uncertain.

The Italians were certainly unlucky—they had two goals mysteriously disallowed in the Croatia game, too. But almost all the decisions that went against them related to bad offside calls, which are two a penny in football: to make a correct judgment, a linesman is required to look simultaneously at the player passing the ball and the player receiving it, a physical impossibility that produces tantrums in every single game. (My own proposed solution—that football be played with one of those children's balls that squeak when kicked, thus giving the linesman an audible signal and allowing him to concentrate solely on the receiving player—was once again foolishly ignored by the authorities.) Totti's red card was similarly unfortunate, although, as he had already received a legitimate card for a similar deception earlier in the tournament, Mr. Moreno was entitled to harbor doubts. And conspiracy theorists would also have to account for Vieri's astonishing miss, as well as for the Italian defensive errors that presented Korea with both of its goals.

Korea's next game, the quarter-final against Spain, was more troubling. Like Italy, Spain had two goals disallowed—or, rather, two goal-scoring opportunities denied, because on both occasions the referee had already stopped play before the ball hit the net. (Guus Hiddink, the engaging Dutch coach of the Korean team, seemed cheerfully confident that his goalkeeper could have saved both efforts had play been allowed to continue, but those of us not in charge of the host nation weren't so sure.) One decision came about because of yet another contentious offside call, but the other was completely baffling. In the golden-goal period, Spain's Joaquin crossed the ball to his center-forward, Fernando Morientes, who looked certain to score; suddenly, the Trinidadian linesman, Michael Ragoonath, raised his flag to indicate that Joaquin had taken the ball over the touchline and out of play. Even without the benefit of a replay, it was possible to see that the call was hopelessly wrong. The game finished 0–0, and Korea went through to the semifinals on penalty kicks, after Joaquin, of all people, had missed his. At the end of the game, some of the Spanish players wept with disappointment and, one suspects, frustration; a couple of them will one day be grateful that they were physically restrained by teammates and the coaching staff from getting at the referee.

This time, it wasn't only the defeated country's media that were outraged. The *Daily Telegraph*, in England, ordered us not to cheer for South Korea in its semifinal against Germany (a controversial instruction, given that most English football fans would root for a Taliban team against Germany in a World Cup match): "The records say that the Koreans knocked out Spain. . . . The records are a lie, and this tournament has descended into farce." *La Nación*, in Argentina, argued that this World Cup should be "declared null and void."

The nature of the Spanish defeat certainly left neutrals more ambivalent about South Korea's progress than they had been hitherto, and this was a great pity, because without the South Koreans' contribution the tournament would have been forgotten almost before it had finished. Their football, bright and busy and attractive, was an unexpected treat, and their fans were sensational. The quality of the games may have been superior during France '98, but there were incessant complaints back then about a lack of atmosphere during the host nation's matches, for which a disproportionate number of tickets seemed to have ended up in bored corporate hands. No one had any cause to moan this time around. With the exception of one or two very courageous and very noticeable deviants, every single Korean citizen wore a red T-shirt, and the entire country screamed at each home pass, save, and shot. We knew this because we could see them all: those who weren't in the stadium were gathered around giant screens in the city centers, as if watching alone at home had temporarily been made a criminal offense. Almost two million people watched Korea's semifinal against Germany from the streets of Seoul, on two outdoor screens—one in the Gwanghwamun district, and another just around the corner, in the City Hall plaza. (And you thought you had a bad view the last time you saw Springsteen or the Stones in your local stadium.) The footage of these enormous red carpets turning ecstatically and teemingly human when the home team scored the winning goal against Italy provided us with one of the most electrifying images of this or any other World Cup. If any host nation has ever earned a handful of incompetent decisions from nervous and flag-happy officials, it was this one.

Despite all the underperforming giants and heroic underdogs, there was something bathetically reassuring about the final, held in Yokohama, Japan, in which Brazil played Germany. One or the other of these two teams has appeared in every World Cup final since 1978, and yet, weirdly, they have never played each other. Certainly, nobody expected either of them to make this final. Brazil lost an unprecedented six times in the large South American qualifying group; less than a year ago, Germany was hammered, 5–1, by England and forced into the indignity of a playoff against Ukraine to gain a place in the tournament. But, with the benefit of hindsight, it seems stupid to have written them off. Gary Lineker, a former player on England's national team who now works for the BBC, once memorably described football as a game in which twenty-two players chase a ball around for ninety minutes—and then the Germans win. And this time they had a relatively easy draw: their first real test did not come until the semifinal, and the removal of both Spain and Italy left them with only Korea to overcome at that point—a difficult, but not intimidating, prospect. They reached the final, typically, unstylishly and infuriatingly, by winning their three knockout games 1–0. Only the U.S.A. team, which was desperately unlucky to go out after a courageous and athletic performance, caused them any problems.

Brazil, meanwhile, chose to infuriate in a different way. In the team's first game, against Turkey, an opponent kicked the ball petulantly but gently at Rivaldo, one of the most effortlessly talented players in the world, as he waited to take a corner. The ball clearly struck Rivaldo on the leg, but he fell to the ground clutching his face, as if he had just lost an eye. It was a contemptible piece of cheating for which the offending Turkish player was sent off, and Rivaldo was later fined for "simulation." In their semifinal, which was also against Turkey, the Brazilians had innumerable chances to score a second goal and kill the game but chose instead to shoot from impossible distances and ludicrous angles when better-placed colleagues were screaming for the ball. (If the just-enough Germans ever start mating with the profligate Brazilians, watch out.) And yet Brazil plays a brand of football—imaginative, fluid, absurdly skillful—that no one else in the world, and certainly nobody in Europe, has ever been able to emulate. This wasn't a vintage Brazilian team, but it still contained three forwards who could walk—or, rather, shuffle, with a couple of wiggles and the odd shimmy—into any other side in the world.

The last goal in the 2002 World Cup was scored by Ronaldo—his second, in an absorbing if hardly epic 2–0 win—whose lifeless performance in the 1998 final was the subject of an extensive parliamentary inquiry in Brazil. (Did I mention that some of us take this game pretty seriously?) If the official version is to be believed, and there is no apparent reason that it shouldn't, then the lifelessness was hardly surprising: Ronaldo suffered some kind of seizure shortly before the kickoff, and his name was initially omitted from the team sheet. But he played anyway—and played just as you'd expect a man who had recently suffered a seizure to play. Ronaldo has had an unhappy, injury-stricken time of it over the last few years, but he finished the 2002 World Cup with a winners' medal and the Golden Boot, awarded to the player with the highest number of goals; he scored eight in this tournament, the most anyone had managed since 1970. And, in the end, it felt right that one of the game's brightest and best-paid stars should provide the tournament's final memory, because if the highest level of professional sport is not about élitism then it is not really about anything very much, apart from a lot of money and a lot of hot air. This World Cup was fun, and that was precisely the trouble with it: who wants fun at the biggest and most important sporting event we have? ♦

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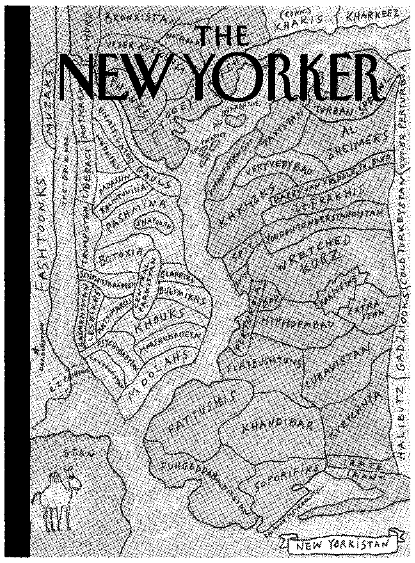

"NEW YORKISTAN"

by Maira Kalman and Rick Meyerowitz

The New Yorker, December 10, 2001

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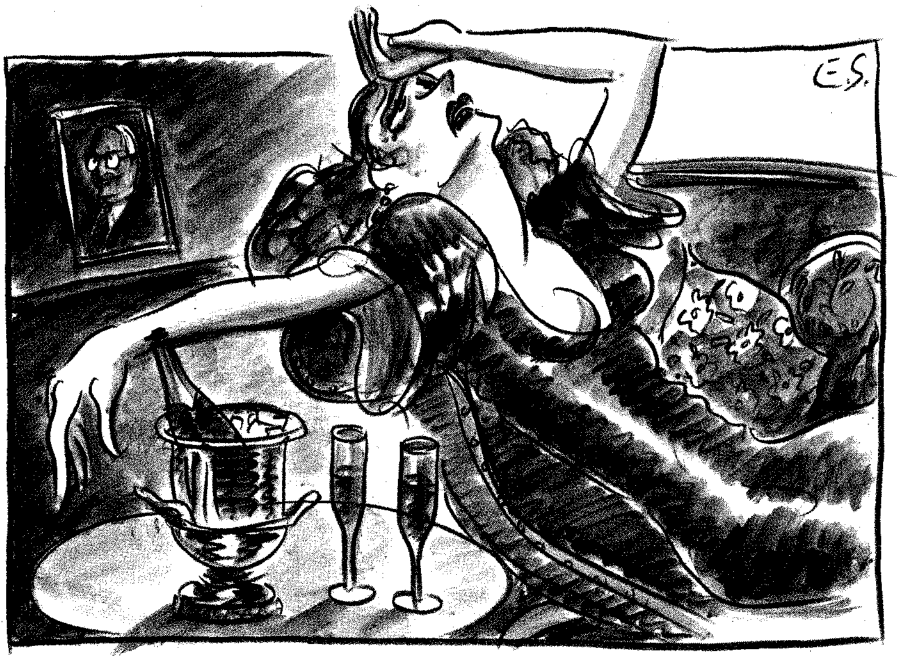
TAINTED LOVE

BY SUSAN ORLEAN

I want to make a confession: I am passionately and uncontrollably in love with Dick Cheney. Lynne, I'm sorry; if I could help it I would. It's just something about him—the strength, the silence, the frank and unabashed baldness, the mystery, the unknowability, the man, the myth, the Vice-Presidentialness of him. It's wild, it's mad, it's hunger, we're crazy like a couple of kids in the last week of school when the teacher is out with a communicable disease and the substitute is a moron and we've sneaked out to the playground—you know, that kind of crazy. There is nothing about him that doesn't transport me to a different, deeper, more womanly place. In a funny way, the undisclosed-safe-location weekends just add a frisson of stolen pleasure to the roiling emotions we share. There. I've said it. I can't hide it anymore.



EDWARD SOREL

Actually, it feels so good to get that off my chest that I'm inclined to make another confession: I've never felt about any man the way I feel about Michael Ovitz. It's beyond desire; it's beyond reason. We know each other in a way that requires no language, no gestures, no contracts, no commissions, no application of foreign substances. He is mine, I am his; I, speaking strictly personally, need no other. I know Michael's pain, his joy, his renewed pain, and his A.T.M. PIN code, but that was more by accident, from randomly punching in numbers and getting it right, and, by the way, he doesn't know mine, because, well, frankly, he never asked, but if he did—and I don't expect him to, but I'm just saying—if he did ask, I would tell him, because we're close in that way. The way in which you would tell each other your PIN codes and never ever think that maybe just once, if you happened to leave your wallet in your other purse, you might need to use it that one time, and you were planning to pay the money back, probably before the person even noticed and felt hurt and betrayed and had that kind of nauseated, light-headed, over-leveraged feeling that so gnaws at the soul.

And I beg you, don't even mention the Men of Enron. With them and me, it's more of an animal thing, more of an actual physical need, an ache so intense it almost hurts. I happened to mention this ache to my internist the other day—just casually, of course, so as not to alarm her, and also because I recently got new health insurance and didn't want to have to name a date of onset of this ache, because it might be construed as a preëxisting condition, which means, of course, that they (my insurance company, not the Men of Enron) would give me nothing for it. That isn't the issue, anyway—I'm not looking for the co-pay or even eighty-per-cent coverage after the deductible; it's different from that—it's wild, it's mad, it's hunger. It's a huge thing; it's bigger than just my urges for K. and J. and A.; it's them, of course, but it's also the he-men in the Death Star/Fat Boy energy-trading unit and the smoldering hunks in accounting and LMJ II. I don't know who I want the most among them, and I don't care, when I feel like this. It's springtime. I am Love. I need nothing more.

I was watching the Home Shopping Network the other day to see if I could catch a glimpse of someone I'm sort of interested in (O.K., since you asked: Barry Diller), and I was feeling a little depressed, on account of its being a holiday—I think it was either Administrative Professionals Day or maybe Take Our Daughters to Work Day—anyway, there I was, all alone, my passion and devotion notwithstanding, my men so close and yet actually not the least bit close at all; in fact, they were far, far away and I was alone on the couch with nothing but my tattered, soiled, slightly foxed memories of our union. Excuse me, our unions. And then I thought, Silly girl! You're lucky to even know them! Lucky to have heard them testify before Congress—or refuse to testify; lucky to have consoled them as they lost their hair, their status, their customary tables at exclusive restaurants, and as they escaped the packs of sensation-seeking media jackals nipping at their heels; and, yes, lucky to have known their love as no other has, or can, or will, yet knowing that it need not—should not!—be shared with the gaping masses until a decent interval after their untimely passing from this hurly-burly world of ours, when an orderly book-rights auction can finally take place. And then, just like that, I was at peace. ♦

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OUR FAR-FLUNG CORRESPONDENTS

WILD SANG

Rangers, poachers, and roots that cost a thousand dollars a pound.

BY BURKHARD BILGER

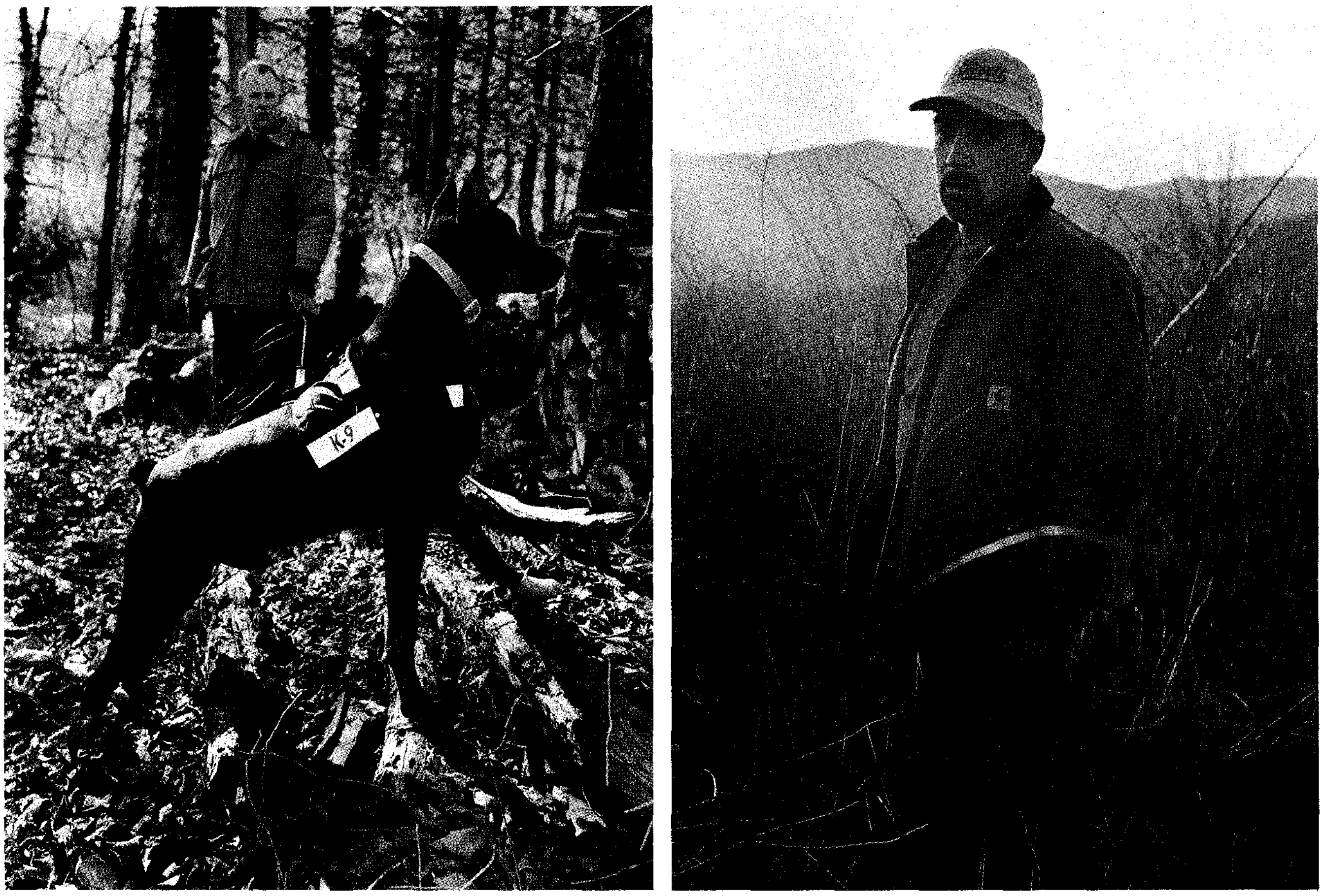
When it's high summer in eastern Tennessee and the mountain laurel is in full leaf; when three times as many tourists travel here as to Yellowstone, and their boom boxes and bickering echo from hollow to hollow; when the Florida lawyers have settled into their mountain dachas and Dolly Parton is playing to packed crowds in Dollywood, the Great Smoky Mountains can seem to have little left to fire the imagination. But even a landscape so thoroughly picked-over has its secret history and its hidden geography. Not far from the North Carolina border, for instance, there's a spot that campers rarely visit. It has no scenic overlook or waterfall, no trail sign or historical marker. But to a few old-timers and their kin it holds the promise of buried treasure. They call it the Honey Pot.

One Sunday afternoon last August, Larry Hartman, a ranger for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, was patrolling nearby when he spotted a pickup truck at the side of the road. Reaching for his park radio, Hartman called in the make and registration—it was a 1986 Toyota, battered and blue, with North Carolina plates—and waited for the dispatcher to confirm his suspicions. Then he headed into the trees. The wind was rising as he walked, carrying the scent of rhododendron and Cherokee roses, and the sky was threatening rain. Halfway up the draw, he turned and bushwhacked along the ridge, circling back toward the truck. An hour later, another ranger joined him at a predetermined location, and a third took position farther up the slope. Then they crouched in silence and waited.

Seen from that vantage, the road snaking through the trees below marked an old and bitter dividing line in the mountains. On one side was national forest; on the other, national parkland. On one side, trees could be cut, animals hunted, plants gathered and sold. On the other side, every living thing was protected by law. Some seventy-five years earlier, park commissions in North Carolina and Tennessee began to carve the Great Smoky Mountains National Park from half a million acres of private land, consigning thousands of small farms and homesteads back to wilderness. But some locals have yet to accept the change in ownership. The only real difference between the two sides of the road, they say, is that the park side has better hunting. The rangers call these people poachers; the poachers call themselves businessmen.

Poaching has always been both the most local and the most cosmopolitan of pursuits around here: a homely vine that somehow entwines Appalachians with Asians, Native Americans with New Agers. In the nineteen-eighties, Chinese buyers often paid up to two thousand dollars for a black bear's gallbladder—a popular pain reliever and liver tonic in Asia—so local hunters shot as many animals as they could find. But the most valuable target in recent years, the focus of the most determined poaching, and the reason that Hartman was hiding in the bushes, was a plant: *Panax quinquefolius,* or American ginseng.

Ginseng is an ordinary-looking shrub that has an extraordinary root. For more than five thousand years, the Asian species (*Panax ginseng*) was used to treat everything from dyspepsia and gout to malaria and leprosy, and American ginseng has been a cure-all for native tribes for perhaps as long. These days, the two roots are the twin pillars of both traditional and modern herbal medicine: the Asian a stimulant, the American a relaxant; the Asian a virility booster, the American a feminine tonic; the Asian an embodiment of yang, the American of yin. But there has never been enough of either of the roots to go around. In the past ten years, the herbal market in the United States has more than tripled, and powdered ginseng is the most popular remedy of first-time users. Wholesale prices for wild ginseng, which is considered more potent than the cultivated variety, have risen to more than a thousand dollars a pound. As a result, close to six million dollars' worth of ginseng has been poached from the Smokies in the past decade alone.



Jim Corbin with a ginseng-sniffing dog; Rodney Moore learned about roots from his grandfather. Photographs by Reuben Cox.

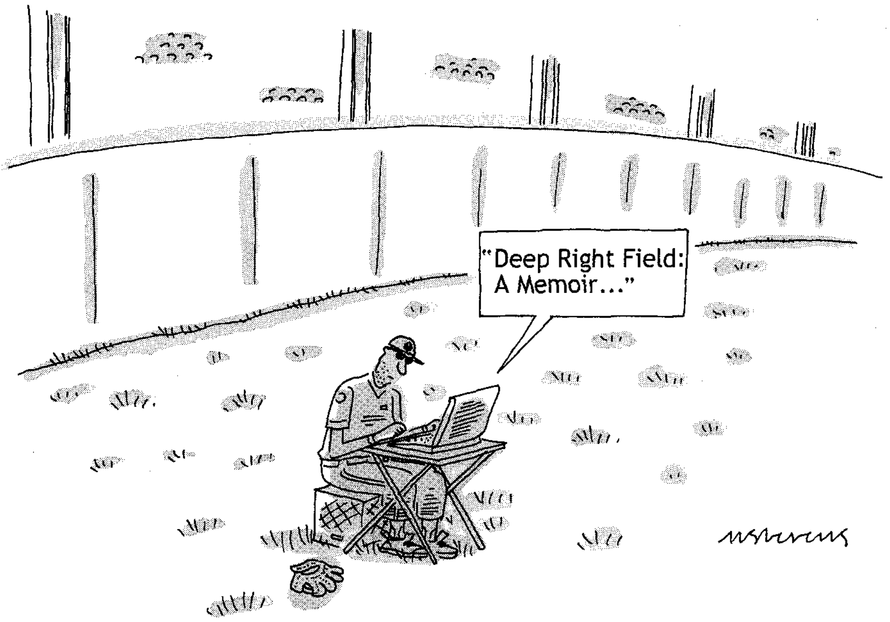
On the evening of the stakeout, daylight was fading and the clouds were curdling overhead when a pair of voices were heard on the slope. The rangers waited until two figures emerged on the road—Billy Joe Hurley and Dewaine Winchester, toting several bulging shopping bags and a freshly soiled digging stick. Then they rose from their cover and converged. "Hurley didn't look too surprised," Hartman recalled. "But Winchester just started running down the road." While one of the other rangers took off in pursuit, Hartman rattled off a description over the radio: "White male, medium build, bluejeans and T-shirt." But before he could finish, the chase was over. "By the time he got to the first curve, he just stopped and turned around," Hartman said. "That's when the skies opened up."

Standing in the downpour, the rangers found four hundred and forty-seven ginseng roots in the suspects' possession. Hurley pointed to the national forest and gave a familiar excuse: "I dug it on that side! I dug it on that side!" Hartman reached into one shopping bag and pulled out a root. In the last of the light, its gnarled branchings and ochre flesh looked like the skin of a jaundiced old man—in Chinese, "ginseng" means "man-root." Hartman peered at the plant for a moment, then lifted it up for Hurley to see. Just beneath the dirt, and the wrinkled growth rings, was a telltale flash of fluorescent orange dye.

The dye was the brainchild of Jim Corbin, a biologist and part-time inventor who works with the North Carolina Department of Agriculture. For the past five years, Corbin has turned the haphazard art of catching poachers into something like a science. His team of "plant-protection specialists" has implanted ginseng roots with microchips, programmed data bases of ginseng habitat, and helped set up seismic monitors to pick up furtive footsteps. Local rangers, in turn, have drawn on military tactics and field equipment to refashion themselves as a botanical SWAT team.

The result has been a kind of turf war not seen in these mountains since Prohibition. Most diggers stick to national forests, where anyone can get a ginseng permit. But others say that the roots in the national park are their birthright—not to mention an untapped asset—and, like the rangers, they've stepped up their tactics. When I visited Corbin last fall, at his home in Sylva, North Carolina, the air was hazy from forest fires in the national park, twenty miles to the west. Some rangers suspected that a ginseng poacher had set the fire; no one doubted that it was arson. "That's always been the way in the Appalachians," Corbin said, slouching against the Chevy Blazer in his driveway and sucking pensively on a grape lollipop. "When they get mad at you, they burn you out. . . . And there is some animosity out there."

Like the bears that occasionally prowl his back yard, Corbin, who is forty-eight, can look deceptively cuddlesome



to the unwary. His six-foot-four, two-hundred-and-twenty-five-pound frame is upholstered with baby fat but packed with muscle beneath it. His small gray eyes huddle shyly behind his plump cheeks. Before earning a degree in biology, Corbin ran a Christmas-tree farm for a living. Before that, he had been drafted as a running back for the Washington Redskins. A knee injury put an end to his playing career, but, despite three operations, an artificial kneecap, and his doctor's admonitions, he still runs three miles every morning and three miles every evening. "If I didn't, I wouldn't fit through the door," he said.

The same sort of self-motivation fuels Corbin's ginseng work. North Carolina has few funds and no labs to spare for fighting plant poachers. So Corbin works from his garage and uses the cheapest materials he can find. "See that dog?" he said, pointing to CJ, a Doberman quivering at attention in his yard. "He's my pilot program."

Reaching behind a chain-link fence, Corbin unclipped CJ's leash and dragged him, twisting and flailing like an uncoiling hose, into the house. Then he took a small sachet filled with ginseng and the dye he had invented, and tucked it under a worn, musty carpet in the garage. "The problem with the dye is that poachers can see it as well as we can, so they just rub it off before they sell it," Corbin said. "But this dog can smell the dye *inside* the root." To demonstrate, he opened the door to the garage. The Doberman lunged in, nails skittering on the cement floor. He charged frantically among the toys and children's bicycles for a moment, flaring his nostrils and flexing his cropped ears. Then, after some prodding from Corbin, he homed in on the carpet and snapped up the prize.

The dog was just an experiment, Corbin admitted, watching CJ disembowel the sachet. "He'll probably end up as a house pet," he said. But in this business the mere threat of a new enforcement tool—however faulty—could be a major deterrent. Corbin, ambling across the garage to the workbench that serves as his laboratory, picked up a wooden exhibit case that contained three glass vials. The first vial was filled with what appeared to be metal filings but were actually tiny, ribbon-like identification tags. "Making those was pretty intensive work," he said. "I had to build a little jig and then use a microscope to punch each ribbon with a Navajo code." The tags were small enough to be injected into ginseng roots and used as proof of poaching, but a ranger could find them only by using an X-ray machine. So Corbin went back to the workbench.

The substance in the two other vials was what had been found on Winchester and Hurley's roots. The result of three years' research into ginseng habitat and physiology, the mixture contained exact proportions of calcium, magnesium, iron and manganese filings, silicon chips, and orange dye. When sprinkled on an exposed ginseng root, the calcium and magnesium are absorbed as nutrients within two hours, carrying the other substances with them. Then, if the plant is poached and confiscated, the Park Service has several layers of evidence to present in court: the dye, which is easily visible and suffuses the root; the silicon chips, which vary for every area of the park; and the filings, which collect under the skin of the root. Reaching into his pocket, Corbin pulled out a magnet and tugged at the filings with it. "If you hold this up to a poached root, you can twirl it like a ballerina," he said.

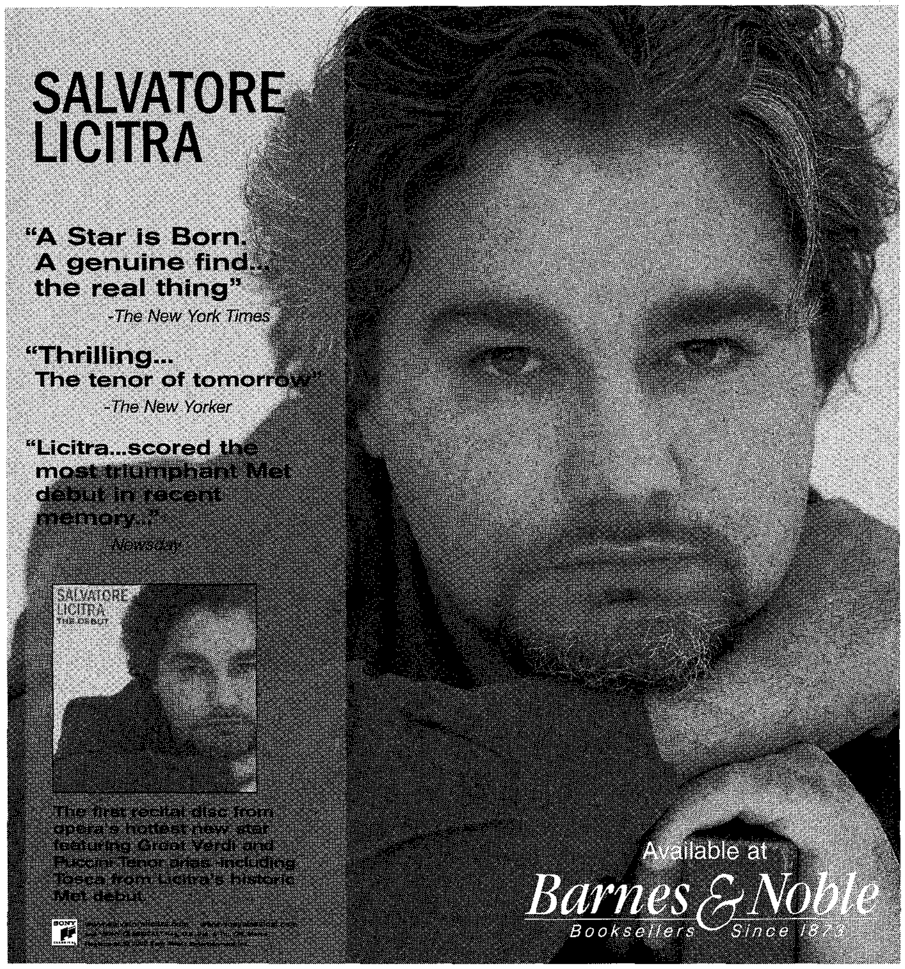
In the five years since Corbin's program began, the sales of twenty-five suspected poachers in the area have been carefully tracked. (Every root sold in the United States has to be inspected and approved by a state or federal agent.) All but five have stopped selling ginseng. "In the Appalachians, when you start a program like this it hits a grapevine and just blossoms bigger and bigger," Corbin said. To help feed this "fear factor," Corbin has made a point of giving interviews and speaking at conferences, and, along the way, twelve states and a Canadian province have adopted his dye. Yet he knows that the poachers won't be cowed for long. Already, some of them bring black lights into the forest to illuminate any fluorescent roots. "It's an arms race, and I guess that's what it always will be," Corbin said, sighing, as he picked up the shredded remains of the sachet. "When you get to the place where they can beat the system, you've just got to come up with something else."

Milas Rathbone didn't seem too worried about ginseng-sniffing dogs. Maybe he never poached from the park, or he did so too little or too well to get caught. Or maybe he thought the park had been poached from him. When he was born, in 1914, the Smokies had yet to be ennobled by any act of Congress, and the property lines were as muddy as the roads. Every year, the Rathbones would grub up eight or ten acres, plant them with corn and beans, and get whatever else they needed from the woods. "I started diggin' herbs when I was eight," Milas told me. "My grandma Price—she was part Indian, Cherokee probably—she'd take me out and I'd just follow her wherever she went." They'd start in the spring, as soon as the sap began to rise, stripping bark from wild-cherry and sumac, sassafras and black-willow trees, and boiling it down to make cough syrups and tonics. As the seasons turned, they'd move on to blackberries and raspberries, branch lettuce, and wild ginger. Finally, in the fall, when the ginseng berries began to flare like embers in the forest, they'd get out their digging sticks.

For the first thirteen years of his life, Rathbone says, he "never went fur down the road." Then, in 1927, the park commissions came and began snapping up land. If they couldn't buy it outright, they could simply condemn it. "Them Rathbones, one time, owned that whole country," Milas said. "The government got it, every bit. Got it for nearly nothin'—eight dollars and ten dollars an acre." He went to work for the highway department, pouring concrete for the new interstate that would one day bring more than nine million tourists into the national park every year. But he never stopped gathering herbs. He just learned to cater to a new clientele.

The modern medicine cabinet had long since been swept clear of folk remedies, but by the nineteen-sixties thalidomide and other disastrous drugs had shaken the popular faith in science. Soon Rathbone was fielding orders, not just for the Asian market but for European drug companies and New Age herbalists: bloodroot for toothpaste, black cohosh for menopausal women, mayapple for chemotherapy. Once, a company in Maryland needed poison ivy for a homeopathic tincture that was thought to prevent itching. Rathbone and his friends promptly gathered four thousand pounds of the plant. "Some of them other boys had to go to the doctor, but it won't poison me," he said. "I've got too much Indian in me."

The first time I met Rathbone, I was with Ray Bowkley, the biggest buyer of wild ginseng in North Carolina. Every few weeks in the fall, Bowkley makes the rounds of ginseng diggers throughout the Smokies, piling dried roots into the back of his car as he goes. On the day I joined him, he went from a mountainside shack to a sports-memorabilia store in a strip mall. He stopped off at a sourwood-honey shop ("We Buy Ginseng," the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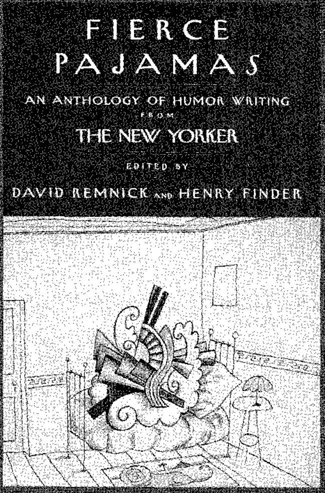
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RANDOM HOUSE

sign read) and went to see a Comanche Indian who sells roots from a nearby Cherokee reservation. At other times, he might meet with a park inspector, a buyer from Hong Kong, or a former cabdriver from Queens who grows ginseng for the New Age market. ("The plants come to you in dreams," he says.) Every year, Bowkley sees more newcomers in the woods: hippies, vegans, and urban refugees; bankers and brokers from Raleigh and Atlanta come to buy land and live in their dream houses—if only for a week or two a year.

Rathbone wasn't one of those people. When we drove up to his house, the old man was hunched over his driveway in rumpled overalls, cracking black walnuts with a hammer. The air was acrid with the scent of burning timber—more than sixteen hundred acres were on fire by then, less than twenty miles away. But Rathbone didn't seem to mind. He led us across the yard, past bandy-legged chickens and dismantled satellite dishes ("I don't fool with them no more"), and waved us toward some crippled furniture on the front porch. He lowered his long, creaky frame onto a half-gutted couch, picked up a bowl of walnut pieces, and began to claw absent-mindedly at the shells. After a moment, he glanced over at Bowkley a little sheepishly. "I ain't got nothin' for you today, Ray," he said.

It was a familiar story. The late fall is usually Bowkley's best season, as diggers unload their stash in time for Christmas. But more and more diggers had little or nothing to sell lately. Some were waiting for the market to heat up again—Bowkley's prices were down to two hundred and twenty-five dollars a pound, because his Asian buyers, fearing a ban on wild ginseng, had stockpiled too much root. But he also worried that other buyers might be stealing his clients. Like most things that thrive on faith, the ginseng business is riven with paranoia. Diggers trade tales of buyers rigging their scales; buyers grumble about diggers substituting cultivated roots for wild ones. The one possibility that no one wants to admit, at least within earshot of the press or the Park Service, is that there just isn't much ginseng around.

The American-ginseng belt stretches from Maine to Alabama and from New York to Oklahoma, but a good plant has always been hard to find. Ginseng tends to send up slender prongs and spade-shaped leaves only on shady, north-facing slopes with deep, loamy soil. It's finicky about rainfall and calcium content, and prey to all manner of pests and fungi. William Byrd, the eighteenth-century Virginia planter and satirist, liked to chew on a ginseng root whenever he went for a stroll. "It chears the Heart even of a Man that has a bad Wife," he wrote, but grows "as sparingly as Truth & Public Spirit."

If American ginseng is worth digging at all, it's only because Asian ginseng is even scarcer. Already, by Byrd's time, the plant had been so overharvested in China that the emperor had to send an army into the mountains every year to find a handful of roots, and in Japan a ginseng habit was a sure road to ruinous debt. "After ginseng," the saying went, "death by hanging." In 1716, when a Jesuit missionary found ginseng near Montreal, Asian buyers quickly cornered the market for it. A pound could be worth two days' wages to a digger and ten times as much to a trader, and the insatiable demand helped shape the settling of the New World. In the seventeen-eighties, New York's Astor family launched its fortunes with a boatload of ginseng bound for China. Soon after, Daniel Boone brought fifteen tons of it up the Ohio River, only to have his boat overturn. Within a year, he was back with another load.

To spare themselves a trek into wilderness, some colonists inevitably tried farming ginseng. But it wasn't until the eighteen-eighties that a retired New York tinsmith named George Stanton perfected a method using wooden screens to simulate forest shade. The ensuing ginseng boom launched the careers of some five thousand ginseng farmers—and probably just as many poachers. "My people tried to persuade me to give up," a Virginian named L. J. Wilson wrote in 1909, after his ginseng farm was raided four times in one year. "But I told them *no*, I would give the next ten years of my life and every cent I could make, or I would catch the rascal." Wilson went on to conceal shotguns around his garden, attaching their triggers to trip wires. When the thieves, Millard and Rue Collins, returned, "Millard came in contact with one of the fine wires and was instantly killed," Wilson wrote. "His people being a sorry low-down class they have never moved his remains, and he sleeps on there in peace, and my sleep is more peaceful, too, for I'm not afraid of my ginseng garden being robbed any more."

Ginseng farms, which are concentrated in Wisconsin, Ontario, and British Columbia, now produce ninety-five per cent of the American-ginseng crop, all but five per cent of which is exported to East Asia. The cultivated roots are fatter and sleeker than their wild-man cousins. They are dried, ground up, sold in Caplets, and taken to relieve stress or to boost the immune system, alleviate diabetes, or sharpen the mind. But the more generic the powder, the more dubious are its effects. When *Consumer Reports* tested ginseng products several years ago, it was found that the amount of active ingredients they contained, a family of compounds known as "ginsenosides," varied by nearly five thousand per cent. The Chinese much prefer whole roots, which they separate into more than forty grades. They believe that the most potent roots are wild, and also more than twenty years old. Yet even these roots are an unproven medicine. Studies have shown that ginseng can, among other things, reduce blood-sugar levels, inhibit the proliferation of cancer cells, and dramatically improve the sex lives of rats. It's just not clear whether any of these effects are strong enough to warrant taking the root in any form. "Ginseng's use as a cure-all makes it hard to find endpoints to measure," Mark Blumenthal, the founder and executive director of the American Botanical Council, says. "Frankly, I don't really know whether I'm getting a discernible effect or not." For now, ginseng's popularity is best justified by an unwritten law of ethnobotany: a billion Chinese can't be wrong, especially if a million Native Americans back them up.

Here, then, is the dilemma: the de-

EVERYTHING MUST GO

Today's class 3-Deifying:
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A sheet of geese bisects the rainstorm.
The water tower is ten storms full.

We practice drawing cubes—
that's the house squared away

& the incubator with Baby.
The dead are in their grid.

O the sleeping bag contains
the body but not the dreaming head.

—*Matthea Harvey*

mand for wild ginseng is unlikely to go down, and the supply can't go up. Canada has already prohibited the gathering of wild ginseng, and North Carolina may soon follow suit. Yet outlawing wild ginseng will only increase the appetite for it, Bowkley says, just as Prohibition stoked an unslakable thirst for moonshine. "When I was growin' up, you didn't need a permit to dig sang, and there wasn't half the people diggin' it," Rathbone said. Back then, a patch of ginseng was both a livelihood and a trust fund: you picked only the oldest plants, and left the seeds and seedlings for the next generation. But more and more young diggers are ripping out everything they can find, and selling the seed to the highest bidder.

Rathbone lifted up a walnut shell and picked at it with thick, blackened fingers, trying to work free a recalcitrant nut. "I just about give it up," he said. "You've got to hit the rough woods to find it." Or the national park.

A few nights after meeting Rathbone, I went to visit his grandson Rodney Moore, who lived just down the road from him. Moore had recently returned from a hunting trip, but from the looks of his house he was still out on bivouac. The rooms were bare, aside from some secondhand furniture and a mammoth console television. T-shirts and jeans were drying above the fireplace, and an assortment of skulls (deer, boar, bear, goat) were scattered on the walls, the side tables, and the mantel. Like his grandpa, who had taught him to dig ginseng at the age of nine, Moore works for the highway department during the week. But on weekends he heads for the woods. Last year, he gathered about a thousand dollars' worth of ginseng—down from thirty-three hundred dollars' worth the year before—in about fourteen full days of digging. When I asked him if he ever digs in the national park, he fixed me with a heavy stare. "They frown on that," he said. Then he broke into a sly grin. "The park *is* the best place to dig."

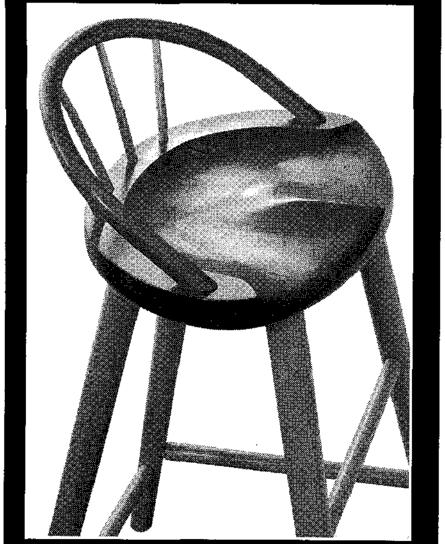
Moore, who is thirty-five years old, has fierce, dark features that are more than offset by an overeager, affectionate nature. "I'm six foot three and two hundred and twenty pounds of twisted steel and sex appeal," he likes to say. As we talked, he brought out a bottle of chilled cherry wine that one of his buddies had made, and checked on a grouse that was poaching in the kitchen. When he saw my eyes drift to the mantel, he pulled down a slender, elegantly curved bone that looked like the tusk of some miniature pachyderm. "They call this a hillbilly toothpick," he said. When I couldn't guess what it was, he laughed and said that it came from a raccoon's penis. Later, he brought over a black bear's gallbladder—withered, blackened, and crusted inside with yellow crystals of bile—and urged me to take a bite. He thought that Asians took it as an aphrodisiac. "Sometimes I'll break off a little piece and swallow it whole," he said. "It does seem to give you a little energy. But I guarantee you won't be thinking about sex if you try to chew it. You'll crawl backward outta your own skin."

Like a lot of diggers, Moore has an abiding love of the woods and an equal contempt for those who patrol it. He says that his grandpa taught him how to take care of his ginseng patches but that the local rangers haven't got a clue. "If you want my opinion, the park is a bunch of shit," he said. "I mean, if you're a hippie with a backpack they think you're O.K., but, if you're an average old Joe Redneck like me, you suck. And if they catch your huntin' dog out there, you'd think they have Eric Rudolph penned up." The stories about plant poaching had been exaggerated to hell and back, he said, just like the ones about Corbin's ginseng program. "Did he actually show you the dye? Hell, I can show you some dye. But I'll guarantee, if they put a bunch of rednecks like me in the woods puttin' dye on it, you know what they're gonna do? Put the dye in one root and stick one in their pocket."

All the old hunting territory was being bought up and fenced off by "ricochet Yankees," Moore said. They got rich up North, moved to Florida, and then came halfway back. Meanwhile, over at the park, there was too much wildlife, yet the rangers wouldn't let you kill it. When invasive species like wild hogs and rainbow trout became a problem, the rangers did the killing themselves—and left the carcasses to rot.

"If I asked you what hot dogs are for, you'd say 'To eat,' " Moore said. "Well, animals are to kill, and sang is to dig. Instead of runnin' around like Secret Squirrel trying to catch someone diggin' it, why don't they buy some seeds and resow it? That way, everyone would benefit, instead of just the hippies and the park rangers." (When I asked Corbin about this later, he said that the available seed was mostly from non-native varieties, but the park would consider stockpiling and sowing native seed.) Moore sank back into his couch and glanced vacantly at the TV, where cop shows had been murmuring at half volume all night. Outside, a hound barked at the shadows and then was still. "I'll tell you what,

THOS. MOSER
CABINETMAKERS



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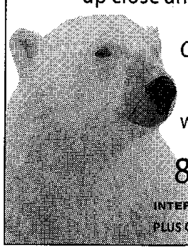

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though," Moore added, after a while. "I'd like to have one of them ginseng-sniffin' dogs. I'd pay pretty good money for one."

By the end of the week, the fires in the park had grown beyond anyone's reckoning. Flames that began by barely singeing the underbrush had flared up so high, in the parched fall air, that they were boiling the sap in distant trees. Fifteen miles from the heart of the blaze, along the park's southern boundary, the black waters of Fontana Lake were suspended in an iris of swirling smoke. The lake had been drawn down to make way for the next year's rains, booby-trapping the waters with barely submerged timber. But for poachers the poor visibility—and the weakened ranger patrols owing to the fire—would be hard to resist.

"Cut that light for a second—I think I hear something," Brad Headley, the burly, buzz-cut ranger beside me, said. We were sitting at the tip of a high, rocky peninsula, shielded by a circle of pines. Behind us loomed the national park; across the water, barely visible against the midnight sky, was the blue-black outline of Nantahala National Forest. Headley pulled a squat gunmetal tube from his pack and scanned the length of the lake on either side, looking like a cyborg with a luminous prosthetic eye. When I peered through the tube after him, the world was suddenly bathed in cool green fire, its every object edged and flaring with sparks. Even a crude night-vision scope like this, Headley said, could pick up a cigarette ember a quarter of a mile away.

At the beginning of the stakeout, one of the other rangers had asked if I wanted to wear body armor. "It's up to you," he said. "But it won't help much against a high-powered rifle." Three and a half years earlier, a local man named Jeremiah Locust had ambushed two rangers on the nearby Blue Ridge Parkway, shooting one fatally and stalking the other while bellowing Cherokee war chants. Locust never revealed his motives for the killing, and he is now serving a life sentence without parole. The rangers, meanwhile, have reorganized along military lines. A four-man resource-protection unit has been trained in man-tracking and tactical team movements, and armed with M-16s and SIG Sauer pistols. They've been equipped with motion detectors, remote cameras, and seismic monitors, and sent on surveillance missions for up to a week at a time. "It's very similar to war," one ranger, who had been a scout in the Gulf War, told me. "Hours and hours of boredom mixed with sheer terror."

Fontana Lake's two hundred and forty miles of unguarded shore are a favorite entry point for poachers. They nearly always work in teams, deploying drivers, lookouts, and decoys, scanning the park-radio frequencies and searching the shores with their own night-vision scopes. Some drop diggers off onshore, fish for a while, and then pick them up again. Others stash their haul in a rotten stump, take a G.P.S. reading, and come back later, along one of the park's "manways"—abandoned logging roads and other hidden trails. "These are thinking people," Headley said. "These are people in tune with their environment." They could read a trail as well as any ranger, and spot a patch of poor camouflage at a hundred yards. Headley cocked his head to the side and held up his hand for a moment. But the sound he'd been hearing was just a single-engine plane passing overhead. "I always maintain that we just catch the dumb ones," he said.

I was reminded of Jim Corbin, on a similar slope the day before. He'd been trying to show me some ginseng roots that he had dyed earlier that season. When he hadn't found any after fifteen minutes, he gave up and took a seat in a bed of dry leaves. Down below, in the Oconaluftee River bottom, a feral cat was slinking up on something in the tall grass. Corbin watched it for a moment and laughed. Catching poachers is mostly a matter of instinct and ancestry, he said. His father, who worked at the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, had been something of a legend. He had a photographic memory and an uncanny knack for second-guessing moonshiners, whom he chased all through the hills of North Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama. "When I was in elementary school, he took me to a still, and I got to watch 'em dynamite it," Corbin said. "That was neat. All that mash up in the trees."

But the poachers have memories and legacies of their own, and they run just as deep. Most were born into this business, as Corbin was born into his, trailing their fathers and grandfathers into the woods, learning their age-old part in a kind of institutionalized feud. "Believe it or not, I know a lot of these poachers, and I like 'em," Corbin said. "They just choose to do somethin' they shouldn't be doing out of a different historical background."

Or maybe they've just found that poaching is worth the risk. It takes about a thousand man-hours to make a single arrest, but even then the result may be just a slap on the wrist. Poaching ginseng on private land is a felony in North Carolina, punishable by up to six months in prison and a five-thousand-dollar fine; for poachers in the national park, the maximum sentence is a year, but no one has ever received it. On the day that Headley and I were out at Fontana Lake, fruitlessly scanning the shores, Billy Joe Hurley pleaded guilty to digging ginseng in the Honey Pot. (Dewaine Winchester later did the same.) But although Hurley had been caught red-handed, he got off with only sixteen hundred dollars in fines and restitution fees. Not a bad investment, a poacher might say, for an old family business.

The fires last fall eventually consumed seven thousand five hundred and eighty acres of forest, more than any other fire in the history of the national park. But on a Wednesday morning more than a week before the final flames had been doused, the air already seemed to be clearing—at least as much as it ever did in the Smokies. From the hills south of the park, through every gap in the stands of bare white oak, the distant ridges were losing their blue indeterminacy, the valleys their false shadows.

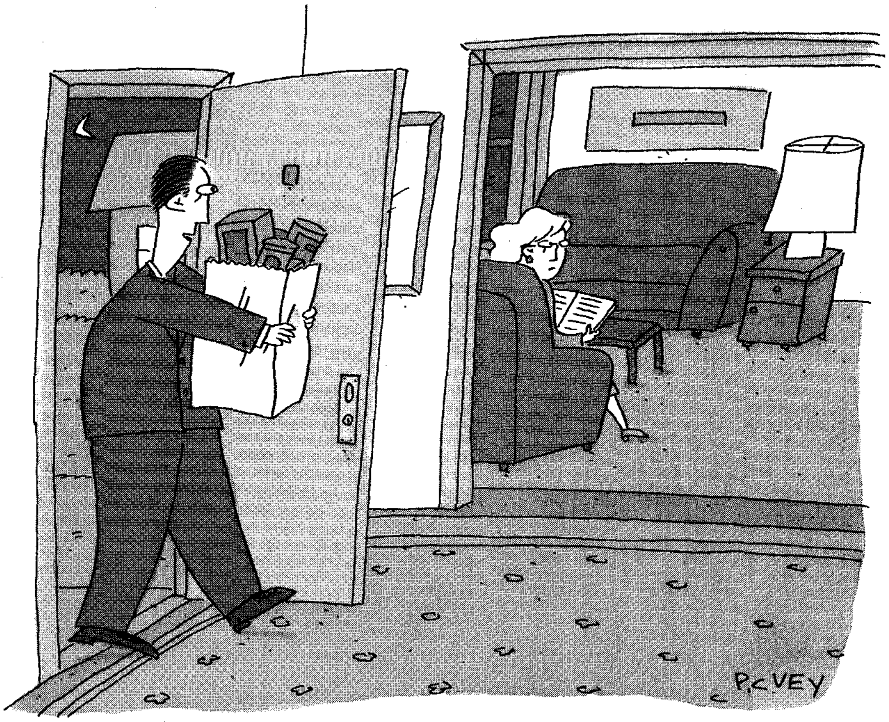
Rathbone had been gathering herbs all morning: gray-green galax leaves for floral arrangements, witch-hazel branches laced with natural astringents, and strips of log moss as tightly woven as carpet samples. "Pull over here," he said to me. Although Rathbone had nearly died of an abdominal aneurysm three years earlier, and had broken his neck while he was in his sixties, he could still scramble through the woods like a billy goat. "See them poplar trees?" he said, pointing to a steep slope facing the road. "That sang used to be all up over there. When the leaves turned yellow, you could see 'em all the way beyond them hills." Some mornings, he said, he'd hike up with a bag tied to his shoulder and come back with a poke full of roots. Permits and permission slips never entered into it.

"There were seven of us children on that mountain yonder," he said. "We had a big old log cabin, two-roomed house, with boards over it. When it snowed, there was as much snow on your bed as there was outside." The mountains were full of chestnut trees then, some of them a hundred feet high and six feet around. In the fall, when he and his grandmother weren't gathering herbs, they'd rake up the chestnuts and roast them or grind them into flour. But then the chestnut blight came, and the loggers and the speculators. And, just when Rathbone was old enough to stake his own claim, the Park Service took what was left.

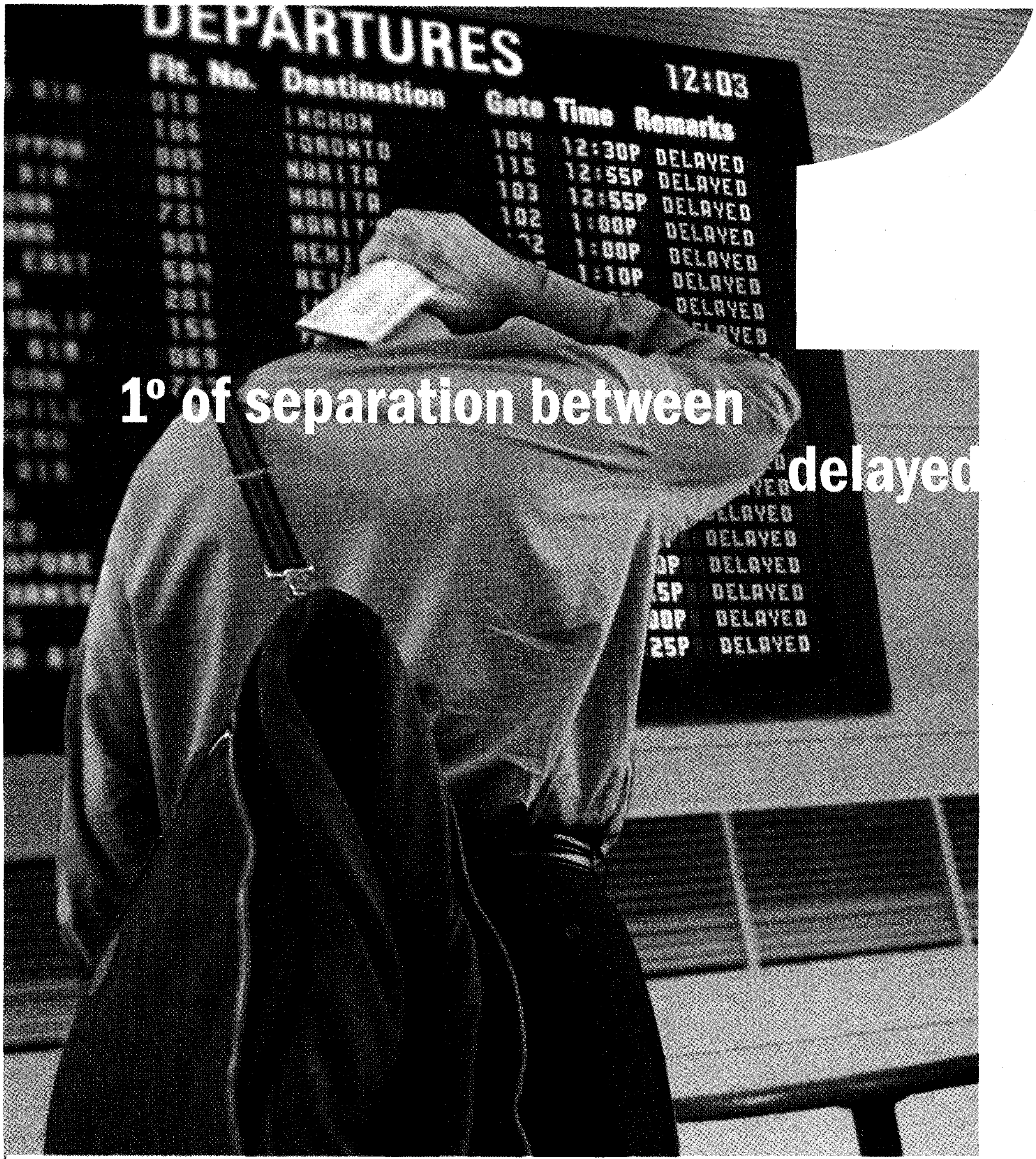
When Rathbone was in his seventies, he had a friend who owned a Piper Cub airplane. On sunny days, they'd sometimes launch it from Max Patch, the bald mountain that rises from the heart of the park like an ancient Druidic heath. They'd swoop down along the river valleys and do barrel rolls above the ridges, fly the plane straight up until it stalled, and fall backward in swooning tailslides. From that height, all the McMansions and mountain dachas looked no different from tobacco barns, and the highways shrank to pale and elegant streams. The higher they flew, the more familiar the mountains became.

Even now, there are man-ways winding through the Smokies which no digital camera has gone down, and which bind rangers and poachers more tightly than any interstate. But their marks seem to fade with each passing season. Standing on the slope where the ginseng grew, Rathbone looked out across the valley, toward the mountain where his grandfather's house once stood. There was a glimmer of plate glass there now, the soaring roofline of a pine-panelled living room, and, beyond it, on a still higher cliff, yet another glimmer, and another roof.

"Milas is a stranger in a strange land," Ray Bowkley had told me. "It used to be all the diggers were like him. Now, when you see someone like that in town, you have the urge to get up and help him across the street." But Rathbone didn't seem to need anyone's help. Dusting the dirt from his hands, he threw the last of the log moss into the car and slammed the door shut. "They keep a-comin' and a-buyin', buildin' houses on these mountaintops," he said. "But I told them people on my grandpa's mountain, 'You can lock the gate, but you can't keep me from crawlin' under it.' " They just laughed, he said, and gave him the combination. ♦



"The computers went down at the supermarket, and everybody took it as a signal to go ahead and loot."



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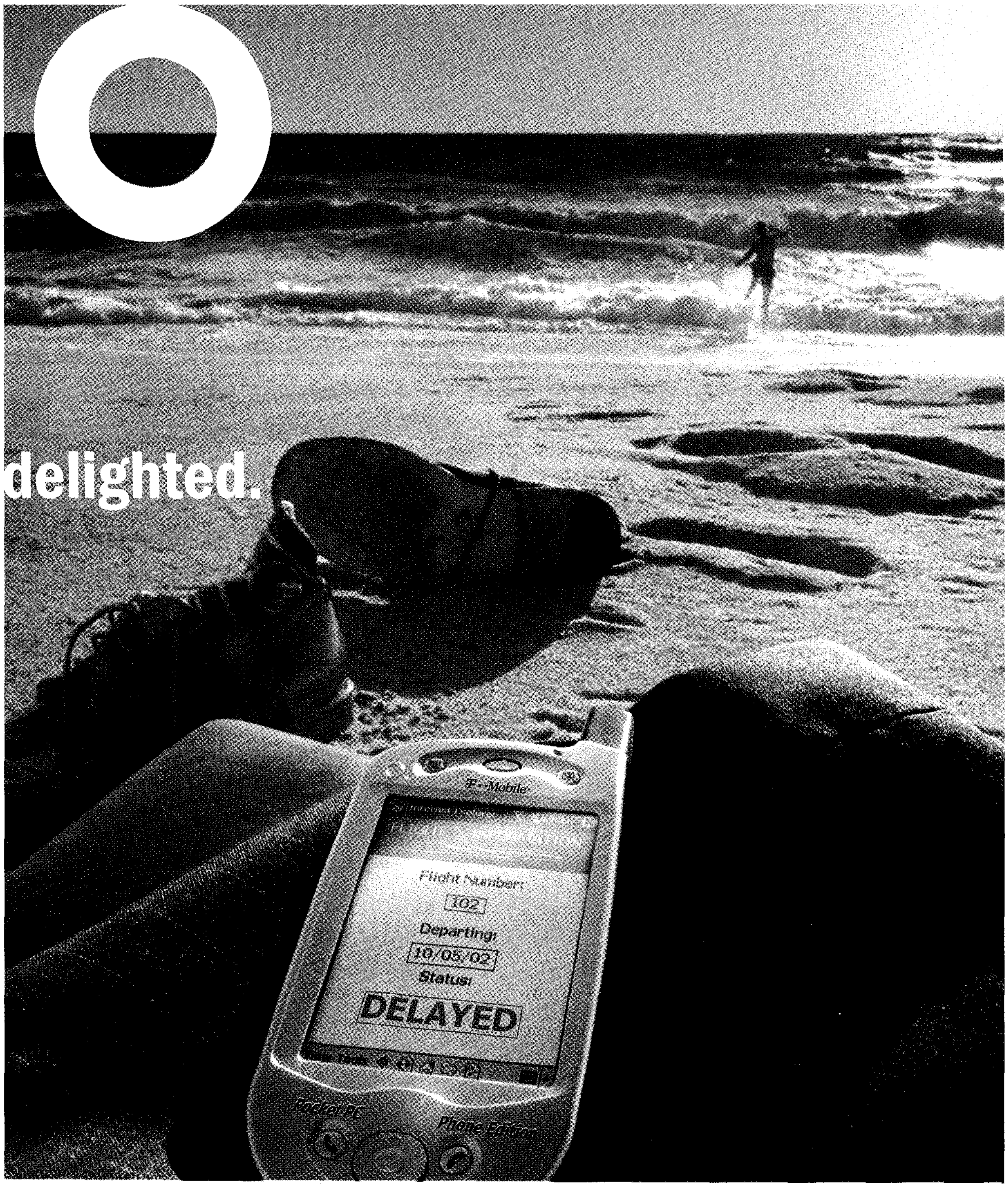
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THE LONG RIDE

How did Lance Armstrong manage the greatest comeback in sports history?

BY MICHAEL SPECTER

A couple of weeks ago, on a sweltering Saturday afternoon, I found myself in the passenger seat of a small Volkswagen, careering so rapidly around the hairpin turns of the French Alps that I could smell the tires burning. Johan Bruyneel, the suave, unflappable director of the United States Postal Service Pro Cycling Team, was behind the wheel. Driving at ninety kilometres an hour occupied half his attention. The rest was devoted to fiddling with a small television mounted in the dashboard, examining a set of complicated topographical maps, and talking into one of two radio transmitters in the car. The first connected Bruyneel to the team's support vehicle, laden with extra bicycles, water bottles, power bars, and other tools and equipment. The second fed into the earpieces of the eight U.S. Postal Service cyclists who were racing along the switchbacks ahead of us. The entire team could hear every word that Bruyneel said, but most of the time he was talking to just one man: Lance Armstrong.

We had been on the road for about three hours and Armstrong was a kilometre in front of us, pedalling so fast that it was hard to keep up. It was the sixth day of the Dauphiné Libéré, a weeklong race that is run in daily stages. Armstrong doesn't enter races like the Dauphiné to win (though often enough he does); he enters to test his legs in preparation for a greater goal—the Tour de France. Since 1998, when he returned to cycling after almost losing his life to testicular cancer, Armstrong has focussed exclusively on dominating the thirty-five-hundred-kilometre, nearly month-long Tour, which, in the world of cycling, matters more than all other races combined. This week, he begins a quest to become the fourth person in the hundred-year-history of the Tour—the world's most gruelling test of human endurance—to win four times in a row. (In 1995, the Spanish cyclist Miguel Indurain became the first to win five consecutively—a record that is clearly on Armstrong's mind.)

The cyclists had covered a hundred and eight kilometres, much of it over mountain passes still capped with snow, despite temperatures edging into the nineties. Now the *peloton*—the term is French for "platoon," and it describes the pack of riders who make up the main group in every race—was about to start one of the most agonizing climbs in Europe, the pass between Mont Blanc and Lake Geneva, which is known as the Col de Joux Plane. In cycling, climbs are rated according to how long and steep they are: the easiest is category four, the hardest category one. The seventeen-hundred-metre Joux Plane has a special rating, known as *hors catégorie*, or beyond category; for nearly twelve kilometres, it rises so sharply that it seems a man could get to the top only by helicopter.

"We start the Joux Plane with a lot of respect for this mountain," Bruyneel said quietly into his radio. "It is long, it is hard. Take it easy. If people are breaking away, let them go. Do you hear me, Lance?"

"Yes, Johan," Armstrong replied flatly. "I remember the mountain."

With only a few days remaining in the 2000 Tour de France, Armstrong had what most observers agreed was an insurmountable lead when he headed toward this pass. He was riding with his two main rivals of that year: Marco Pantani, the best-known Italian cyclist, and Jan Ullrich, the twenty-eight-year-old German who won the Tour in 1997, and who in the world of cycling plays the role of Joe Frazier to Armstrong's Ali. As they started to climb, Armstrong seemed invincible. Halfway up, though, he slumped over his handlebars, looking as if he had suffered a stroke, and Ullrich blew right by him.

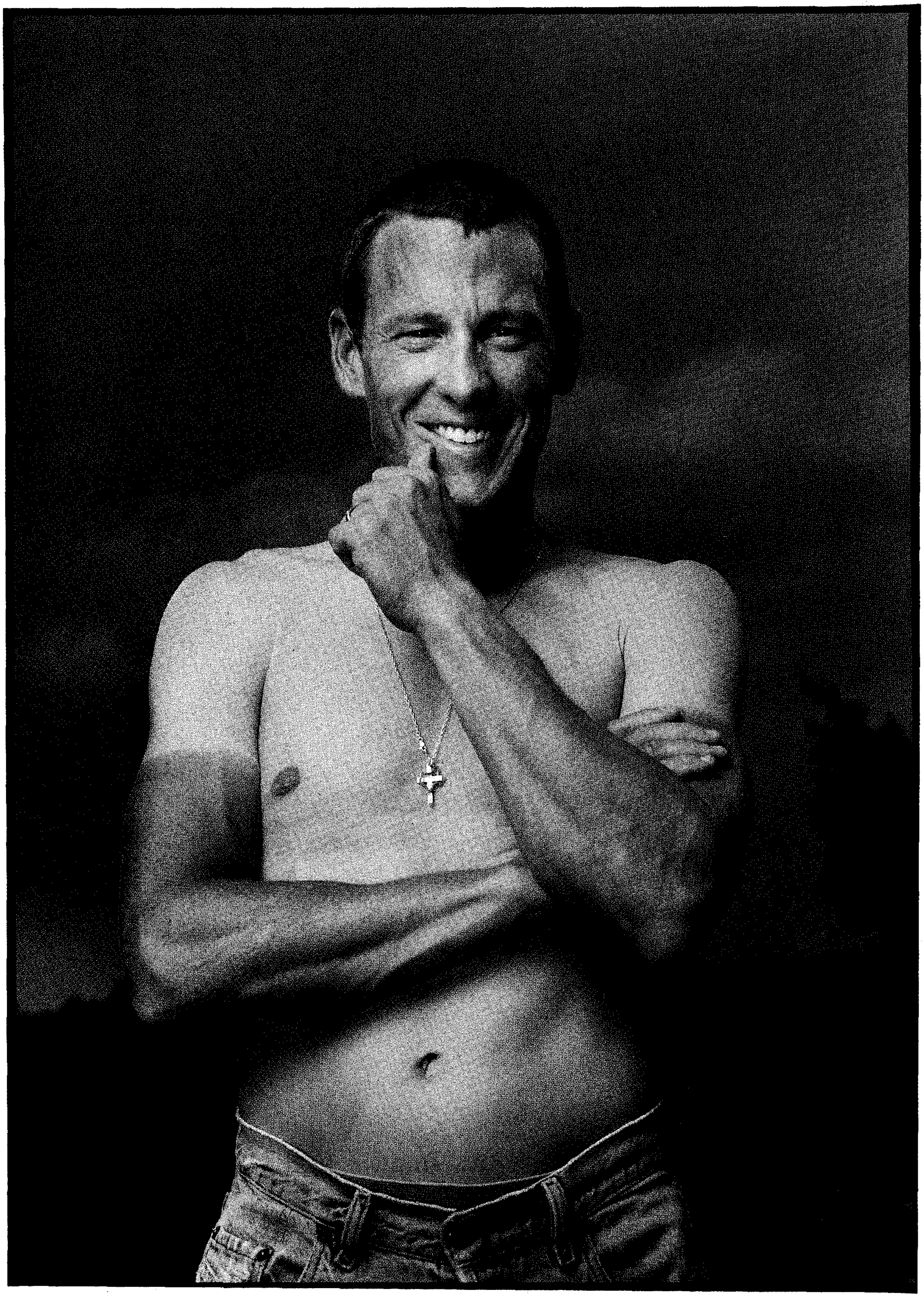
"I bonked," Armstrong said later, using a cyclist's term for running out of fuel. A professional cyclist consumes so much energy—up to ten thousand calories during a two-hundred-kilometre mountain stage—that, unless some of it is replaced, his body will run through all the glycogen (the principal short-term supply of carbohydrates the body uses for power) stored in his muscles. Armstrong hadn't eaten properly that morning; then he found himself cut off from his *domestiques*—the teammates who, among other things, are responsible for bringing him supplies of food and water during the race. "That was the hardest day of my life on a bike," Armstrong said later. He was lucky to finish the day's stage, and even luckier to hold on and win the race.

"This isn't just a stage in a race for Lance," Bruyneel said now, as Armstrong approached the bottom of the slope. "He needs to defeat this mountain to feel ready for the Tour." This time, Bruyneel made sure that the *domestiques* ferried water, carbohydrate drinks, and extra power bars to Armstrong throughout the day. They periodically drifted back to our car and performed a kind of high-speed docking maneuver so that Bruyneel could thrust water bottles, five or six at a time, into their outstretched arms.

Last year, Armstrong won the Tour, for the third time in a row, by covering 3,462 kilometres at an average speed of more than forty kilometres an hour—the third-fastest time in the history of the event. In all, during those three weeks in July, Armstrong spent eighty-six hours, seventeen minutes, and twenty-eight seconds on the bike. "Lance almost killed himself training for the last Tour," Bruyneel told me. "This year, he is in even better shape. But the press still wants to talk about drugs."

It is, of course, hard to write about cycling and *not* discuss performance-

CORBIS SABA



Armstrong's heart is almost a third larger than an average man's; his body seems built for cycling. Photograph by Martin Schoeller.

enhancing drugs, because at times so many of the leading competitors seem to have used them. Strict testing measures have been in force since 1998, when the Tour was nearly cancelled after an assistant for the Festina team was caught with hundreds of vials of erythropoietin, or EPO, a hormone that can increase the oxygen supply to the blood. But the changes have brought only limited success: just this May, Stefano Garzelli and Gilberto Simoni, two of Europe's leading cyclists, were forced to withdraw from the Giro d'Italia, Italy's most important race.

Because Armstrong is the best cyclist in the world, there is an assumption among some of those who follow the sport that he, too, must use drugs. Armstrong has never failed a drug test, however, and he may well be the most frequently examined athlete in the history of sports. Whenever he wins a day's stage, or finishes as one of the top cyclists in a longer race, he is required to provide a urine sample. Like other professionals, Armstrong is also tested randomly throughout the year. (The World Anti-Doping Agency, which regularly tests athletes, has even appeared at his home, in Austin, Texas, at dawn, to demand a urine sample.) Nobody questions Armstrong's excellence. And yet doubts remain: is he really so gifted that, like Secretariat, he easily dominates even his most talented competitors?

"It's terribly unfair," Bruyneel told me as we drove through the mountains. "He is already winning, and is extremely fit. Still, people always ask that one question: How can he do this without drugs? I understand why people ask, because our sport has been tainted. But Lance has a different trick, and I have watched him do it now for four years: he just works harder than anyone else alive."

Lance Armstrong's heart is almost a third larger than that of an average man. During those rare moments when he is at rest, it beats about thirty-two times a minute—slowly enough so that a doctor who knew nothing about him would call a hospital as soon as he heard it. (When Armstrong is exerting himself, his heart rate can edge up above two hundred beats a minute.) Physically, he was a prodigy. Born in 1971, Armstrong was raised by his mother in Plano, a drab suburb of Dallas that he quickly came to despise. He never knew his father, and refers to him as "the DNA donor." He has written that "the main thing you need to know about my childhood is that I never had a real father, but I never sat around wishing for one, either. . . . I've never had a single conversation with my mother about him."

He was a willful child and didn't like to listen to advice. "I have loved him every minute of his life, but, God, there were times when it was a struggle," his mother, Linda, told me. She is a demure woman with the kind of big blond hair once favored by wives of astronauts. "He has always wanted to test the boundaries," she said. Armstrong admits that he was never an easy child. In his autobiography, "It's Not About the Bike," which was written with the journalist Sally Jenkins, he said, "When I was a boy I invented a game called fireball, which entailed soaking a tennis ball in kerosene, lighting it on fire, and playing catch with it."

Armstrong was an outstanding young swimmer, and as an adolescent he began to enter triathlons. By 1987, when he was sixteen, he was also winning bicycle races. That year, he was invited to the Cooper Institute, in Dallas, which was one of the first centers to recognize the relationship between fitness and aerobic conditioning. Everyone uses oxygen to break down food into the components that provide energy; the more oxygen you are able to use, the more energy you will produce, and the faster you can run, ride, or swim. Armstrong was given a test called the VO_2 Max, which is commonly used to assess an athlete's aerobic ability: it measures the maximum amount of oxygen the lungs can consume during exercise. His levels were the highest ever recorded at the clinic. (Currently, they are about eighty-five millilitres per kilogram of body weight; a healthy man might have a VO_2 Max of forty.)

Chris Carmichael, who became his coach when Armstrong was still a teenager, told me that even then Armstrong was among the most remarkable athletes he had ever seen. Not only has his cardiovascular strength always been exceptional; his body seems specially constructed for cycling. His thigh bones are unusually long, for example, which permits him to apply just the right amount of torque to the pedals.

Although Armstrong was talented, he wasn't very disciplined. He acted as if he had nothing to learn. "I had never met him when I took over as his coach," Carmichael told me. "I called him up and we talked on the phone. He was kind of rude. Not kind of rude. He was completely rude. He was, like, 'So you are the new coach—what are you going to teach me?' He just thought he was King Shit. I would tell him to wait till the end of a race before making a break. He just couldn't do that. He would get out in front and set the pace. He would

Victoria Roberts

"You forget what the sand smells like, then you remember and swear you'll never leave, then you get bored."

burn up the field, and when other riders came alive he would be done, spent." Still, Armstrong did well in one-day races, in which bursts of energy count as much as patience or tactical precision. In 1991, after several years of increasingly impressive performances, he became the U.S. amateur champion, and the next year he turned pro. In 1993, he became the youngest man ever to win a stage in the Tour de France; he won the World Road Championships the same year.

In 1996, Armstrong signed a contract with the French cycling team Cofidis, for a salary of more than two million dollars over two years. He had a beautiful new home in Austin, and a Porsche that he liked to drive fast. Then, in September, he became unusually weak and felt soreness in one of his testicles. Since soreness is a part of any cyclist's life, he didn't give it much thought. One night later that month, however, several days after his twenty-fifth birthday, he felt something metallic in his throat while he was talking on the phone. He put his friend on hold, and ran into the bathroom. "I coughed into the sink," he later wrote. "It splattered with blood. I coughed again, and spit up another stream of red. I couldn't believe the mass of blood and clotted matter had come from my own body."

Within a week, Armstrong had surgery to remove the cancerous testicle. By then, the disease had spread to his lungs, abdomen, and brain. He needed brain surgery and the most aggressive type of chemotherapy. "At that point, he had a minority chance of living another year," Craig Nichols, who was Armstrong's principal oncologist, told me. "We cure at most a third of the people in situations like that." A professor at Oregon Health Sciences University who specializes in testicular cancer, Nichols has remained a friend and is an adviser to the Lance Armstrong Foundation, which supports cancer research. Nichols described Armstrong as the "most willful person I have ever met." And, he said, "he wasn't willing to die." Armstrong underwent four rounds of chemotherapy so powerful that the chemicals destroyed his musculature and caused permanent kidney damage; in the final treatments, the chemicals left burns on his skin from the inside out. Cofidis, convinced that Armstrong's career (and perhaps his life) was over, told his agent while he was still in the hospital that it wanted to reconsider the terms of his contract. That may have turned out to be the worst bet in the history of sports.

Armstrong did recover, but his first attempts to return to competition ended in exhaustion and depression. "In an odd way, having cancer was easier than recovery—at least in chemo I was *doing* something, instead of just waiting for it to come back," he wrote. In 1998, he decided to make a more serious effort to return to racing. Again, he couldn't stick with it. "The comeback was still amazingly risky," Carmichael told me. "There wasn't a doctor on this earth who could say that Lance Armstrong's lungs weren't fucked up, the cancer wasn't going to come back. Nobody said, 'You will be successful and, by the way, you will win the Tour.' He was afraid, so he just quit. I was shocked. He beats cancer. Goes to hell and back. Goes to Europe. Trains his ass off. Trained harder than ever. In the Ruta del Sol"—a five-day race held each year in Spain—"he was fourteenth. He had never done better, even before cancer, and all indications were that he was on the verge of the greatest comeback in sports, and he said, 'Hey, I'm quitting.' My coaching side just wanted to scream."

Carmichael and Bill Stapleton, Armstrong's close friend and agent, helped persuade him that this wasn't the way to end his career. "We said, 'You will look back on this and be disappointed—you are going out as a quitter,' " Carmichael told me. Armstrong agreed to prepare for one last race, in the United States. He, Carmichael, and a friend went to Boone, a small town in North Carolina where Armstrong liked to train. "Early April," Carmichael recalled. "The first day was nice. Then the weather turned ugly. I would follow behind in the car as they trained. One day, we were to finish at the top of Beech Mountain. It was a long ride, a hundred-plus miles, then the ride to the top. Something happened on that mountain. He just dropped his partner and he went for it. He was racing. It was weird. I was following behind him in the car. This cold rain was now a wet snow. And I rolled down the window and I was honking the horn and yelling, 'Go, Lance, go!' He was attacking and cranking away as though we were in the Tour. Nobody was around. No human being. Not even a cow. He got up to the top of that mountain and I said, 'O.K., I'll load the bike on the car and we can go home.' He said, 'Give me my rain jacket—I'm riding back.' Another thirty miles. That was all he said. It was like throwing on a light switch."

Armstrong now says that cancer was the best thing that ever happened to him. Before becoming ill, he didn't care about strategy or tactics or teamwork—and nobody (no matter what his abilities) becomes a great cyclist without mastering those aspects of the sport. Despite Armstrong's brilliant early start in the 1993 Tour, for example, he didn't even finish the race; he dropped out when the teams entered the most difficult mountain phase, in the Alps. (He also failed to finish in 1994 and 1996.)

As Carmichael pointed out to me, Armstrong had always been gifted, but "genetically he is not alone. He is near the top but not at the top. I have seen people better than Lance that never go anywhere. Before Lance had cancer, we argued all the time. He never trained right. He just relied on his gift. He would do what you asked for two weeks, then flake off and do his own thing for a month or two. And then a big race would be coming up and he would call me up, all tense, telling me, 'God, I have got to start training, and you guys better start sending me some programs.' I would say, 'Lance, you don't just start preparing things four weeks before a race. This is a long process.' "

Cycling is, above all, a team sport, and the tactics involved are as complicated as those of baseball or basketball. "Ever try to explain the infield-fly rule to somebody?" Armstrong asked me when we were in Texas, where he lives when he is not racing or training in Europe. "You have to watch it to get it. As soon as you pay some attention to the tactics, cycling makes a lot of sense."

Riding through the French mountains with Bruyneel, a genial thirty-seven-year-old who has been with U.S. Postal since 1999, soon after Armstrong joined the team, I saw what he meant. (Armstrong's athletic advisers complement each other: Carmichael is the physical strategist, and Bruyneel the tactician.) "It looks like Victor is good today, so let's save him a bit longer for the Colombiere," Bruyneel radioed to Armstrong about halfway through the day's ride. "Sounds like a good idea," Armstrong replied. In other words, Victor Hugo Peña, a promising young Colombian climber on the team, seemed strong enough to lead Armstrong over one of the big peaks that the racers would encounter before the Col de Joux Plane. Riders like Hugo Peña "work" for Armstrong; they are not attempting to win the race themselves but, rather, focussing on preventing another team from defeating Armstrong. Their job is to patrol the *peloton*. If a competing star tries to escape from the pack in a breakaway, they must be ready to chase him down, in order to tire him out and make him less of a threat later in the race.

Until it is time to sprint, climb, or attempt a breakaway, there is usually at least one team rider positioned in front of his leader. Riding directly behind another man—which is called drafting—can save a skilled cyclist as much as forty per cent of his energy. Asker Jeukendrup, a physiologist who directs the Human Performance Laboratory at the University of Birmingham, has carried out extensive studies of the energy expended by cyclists when they race. Several years ago, Jeukendrup attached power meters to the bicycles of several Tour participants during critical stages. A power meter records a rider's heart rate, his pedal cadence, his speed, and, most important, the watts that he generates with every turn of the wheels. (Watts provide the most accurate measurement of the intensity of exercise; heart rates vary and so does speed. The amount of work needed to climb a hill remains the same no matter how fast you ride.)

Jeukendrup recorded the effort expended by a cyclist riding for six hours at forty kilometres an hour in the middle of the *peloton*, shielded from the wind. He compared this figure with the power needed to propel that same man riding alone. In the pack, the cyclist used an average of ninety-eight watts—which would never tire a well-trained professional. On his own, however, the cyclist expended an average of two hundred and seventy-five watts—nearly three times the power—to maintain the same speed. It is easy to see what this means: in any race, the guy out front is often suffering in his attempt to lead the *peloton*, while somebody like Armstrong, safely tucked into a cocoon of teammates, can cruise just a few yards behind the leader and be "pulled" at essentially the same speed, conserving energy for later.

The *peloton* can cover up to two hundred and fifty kilometres a day without stopping, like a rolling army; there is a "feed zone" about halfway through each stage, where cyclists slow down enough to be draped with a cloth pouch, called a musette, which is filled with fruit, power bars, and other high-carbohydrate snacks. The team members take turns "working," or pulling, at the front to give each other a rest. (Even competitors, when they ride together, take turns out front, sharing the advantages of drafting.) In some ways, cycling retains an odd chivalry that is more readily associated with the trenches of the First World War. During last year's Tour, for instance, at a crucial moment in the Pyrenees, Jan Ullrich veered off the road and into a ditch; Armstrong waited for him to get back on his bike and catch up. Ullrich almost certainly would have done the same for him. When a leader needs to urinate, the whole pack slows down. It is an unspoken but very clear element of the etiquette of professional cycling that nobody is permitted to benefit by breaking away while an opponent urinates (or, worse yet, when part of the *peloton* is caught at a train crossing). Anyone who did would be unlikely to finish the race. After all, it takes little to knock a man off a bicycle, particularly at high speeds; this is called flicking, from the German *ficken*—which means "to fuck."

Apart from the Olympics and World Cup soccer, the Tour is the most popular sporting event in Europe. In France, July is a carnival, complete with thousands of cars, buses, motorcycles, and helicopters following the Tour, and daily television coverage. This year, at least fifteen million people—a quarter of the country's population—are expected to line the highways to watch the cyclists whiz by in a blurred instant. Every morning, kids mass outside the team buses, begging for autographs. If a spectator is lucky, someone in the *peloton* will toss a used water bottle his way; it is the cycling world's version of a foul ball.

The Tour de France is exactly what its name suggests: a tour of France. The race takes place over the course of three weeks, with a day or two of rest, and the course is altered slightly each year, so that it passes through different villages. Each day, there is a new stage; when all the stages have been completed, the man with the fastest cumulative time wins. (This year's Tour will be the shortest in its history; some people believe this is an attempt to reduce Armstrong's advantage.) As a commercial and logistical endeavor, the Tour could be compared to a Presidential campaign or the Super Bowl. Its budget is in the tens of millions of dollars, and the winner receives close to four hundred thousand dollars. The money comes from location fees, paid by towns that host a stage, and from advertising revenues and broadcast licenses. The Tour is treated as if it were its own sovereign state within France: it has a police force and a travelling bank (the only one in the country open on Bastille Day). The entourage includes riders, mechanics, masseurs, managers, doctors, cooks, journalists, and race officials. Each team starts the race with nine riders (though it is common for as many as half to drop out), who usually work to further the goals of their leader, like Armstrong or Ullrich—who injured his knee earlier this year and will not compete.

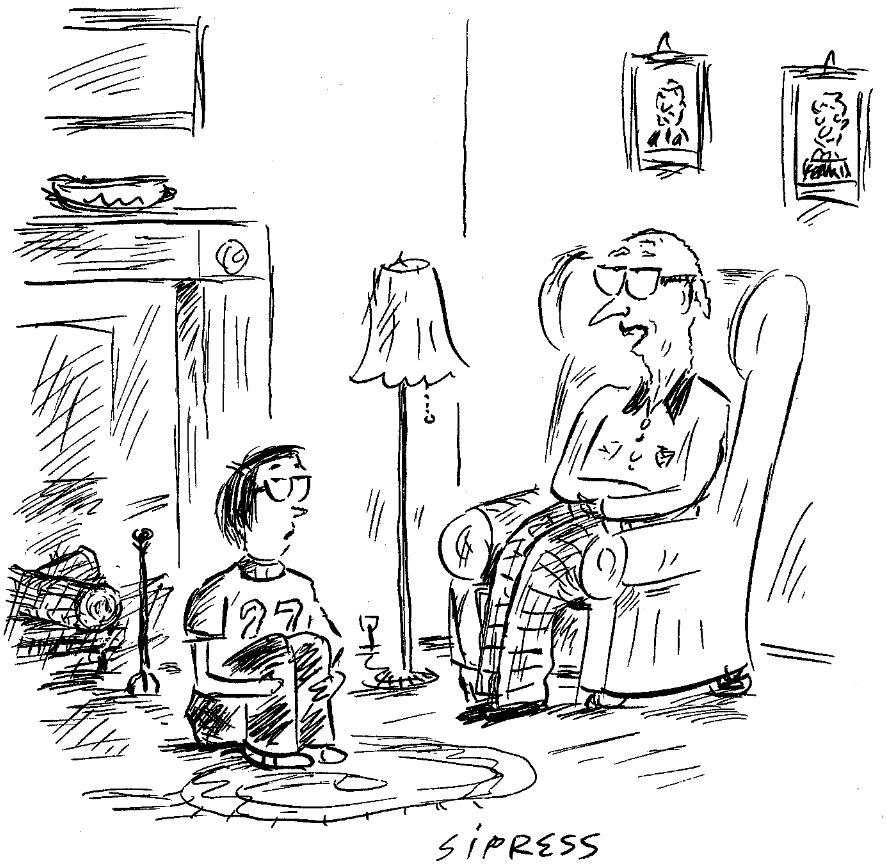
Since individual excellence can get one only so far in a race of this magnitude, it is also crucial to have the right team, to provide organization, finances, and experience. U.S. Postal has all that; it is, in its way, pro cycling's Yankees—with climbing specialists, sprinters, and a powerful bench. This is why so many cyclists agree to work as *domestiques*, putting their success second to Armstrong's. "You work for a teammate who is older and more experienced," Victor Hugo Peña told me late one day between stages of the Dauphiné.

I was curious why a talented cyclist would agree to play such a role. "It is an apprenticeship—you have to learn the business," Hugo Peña said. "If you get respect, work well, and are good, you move up." Armstrong himself worked as a *domestique* when he was starting out. He told me that he finds the system reassuring. Bruyneel, who was a successful professional, and won two stages in the Tour, agreed. "What does a man gain from riding for himself and coming in fiftieth?" he said. "If you see your job as helping your team win, you will get more out of that than simply riding and losing. It's fun to be part of a winning team." And it is also profitable; even a journeyman cyclist can make a hundred thousand dollars a year. (This is nothing like what the winners make, of course; between his salary and the endorsements, Armstrong earned about fifteen million dollars last year.) Still, there comes a point when a talented cyclist no longer wants to occupy a supporting role and tries to establish himself as a potential leader. For several years, Armstrong's deputy on the U.S. Postal team was his friend Tyler Hamilton. This year, with Armstrong's encouragement, Hamilton began riding for a Danish competitor, CSC Tiscali, and, as one of its leaders, he placed second in the Giro d'Italia.

The physical demands on competitive cyclists are immense. One day, they will have to ride two hundred kilometres through the mountains; the next day there might be a long, flat sprint lasting seven hours. Because cyclists have such a low percentage of body fat, they are more susceptible to infections than other people. (At the beginning of the Tour, Armstrong's body fat is around four or five per cent; this season, Shaquille O'Neal, the most powerful player in the N.B.A., boasted that his body-fat level was sixteen per cent.)

The Tour de France has been described as the equivalent of running twenty marathons in twenty days. During the nineteen-eighties and nineties, Wim H. M. Saris, a professor of nutrition at the University of Maastricht, conducted a study of human endurance by following participants in the Tour. "It is without any doubt the most demanding athletic event," he told me. "For one day, two days—sure, you may find something that expends more energy. But for three weeks? Never."

Looking at a wide range of physical activities, Saris and his colleagues measured the metabolic demands made on people engaged in each of them. "On average, the cyclists expend sixty-five hundred calories a day for three weeks, with peak days of ten thousand calories," he said. "If you are sedentary, you are burning perhaps twenty-five hundred calories a day. Active people might



"When I was your age, I was fifteen."

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"I have seen people better than Lance that never go anywhere," his coach said. "Before Lance had cancer, we argued all the time. He

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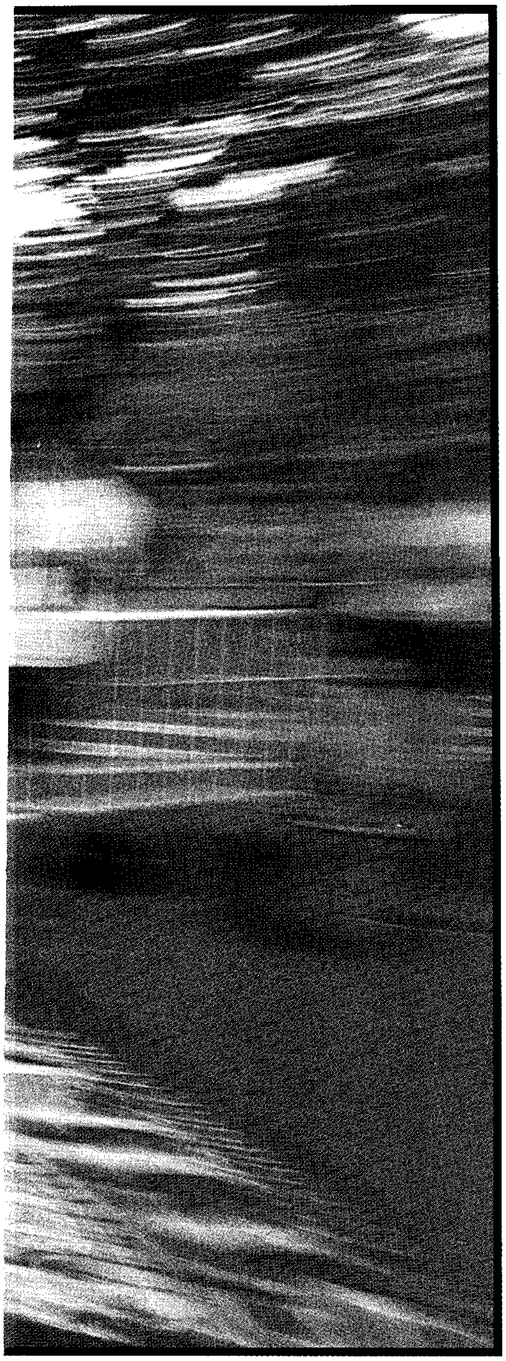
burn as many as thirty-five hundred."

Saris compared the metabolic rates of professional cyclists while they were riding with those of a variety of animal species, and he created a kind of energy index—dividing daily expenditure of energy by resting metabolic rate. This figure turned out to range from one to seven. An active male rates about two on Saris's index and an average professional cyclist four and a half. Almost no species can survive with a number that is greater than five. For example, the effort made by birds foraging for food sometimes kills them, and they scored a little more than five. In fact, only four species are known to have higher rates on Saris's energy index than the professional cyclists in his study: a small Australian possum, a macaroni penguin, a large seabird called a gannet, and one species of marsupial mouse.

This spring, Armstrong, who doesn't relax much to begin with, was spending up to thirty-five hours a week on his bicycle. When I met him, in April, he had just flown to Austin from Europe, where he had been racing, for a forty-eight-hour "drop-in," in order to raise money for the Lance Armstrong Foundation. This required him to take the Concorde from Paris to New York, change planes, and, once he'd landed in Austin, drive to an afternoon photo shoot. Then he signed books, cycling jerseys, and posters for cancer survivors and sponsors of the foundation. After that, he went to a fund-raising dinner. A few hours later, the foundation's annual charity weekend, the Ride for the Roses, would officially begin, with an outdoor rock concert at the Austin Auditorium Shores arena. But Armstrong was feeling restless; he hadn't been on his bicycle



never trained right. He just relied on his gift."

for nearly a day. So he changed, and went for a thirty-five-mile spin. At eight-thirty that evening, he was standing backstage at the benefit concert, which featured Cake and the Stone Temple Pilots. I met up with him there; Armstrong, who is surprisingly slight, wore jeans, sandals, and a Nike golf cap. He didn't seem a bit tired.

Every ounce of fat, bone, and muscle on Armstrong's body is regularly inventoried, analyzed, and accounted for. I asked him if he felt it was necessary to endure the daily prodding and poking required to provide all this information, and to adhere so rigidly to his training schedules. "Depends whether you want to win," he replied. "I do. The Tour is a two-thousand-mile race, and people sometimes win by one minute. Or less. One minute in nearly a month of suffering isn't that much. So the people who win are the ones willing to suffer the most." Suffering is to cyclists what poll data are to politicians; they rely on it to tell them how well they are doing their job. Like many of his competitors in the *peloton*, Armstrong seems to love pain, and even to crave it.

"Cycling is so hard, the suffering is so intense, that it's absolutely cleansing," he wrote in his autobiography. "The pain is so deep and strong that a curtain descends over your brain. . . . Once, someone asked me what pleasure I took in riding for so long. 'Pleasure?' I said. 'I don't understand the question.' I didn't do it for pleasure. I did it for pain." Armstrong mentioned suffering (favorably) in each of my conversations with him. Even his weekend in Texas, which was ostensibly time off from the grinding spring training schedule, seemed designed to drive him to the brink of exhaustion; there were dozens of meetings with donors, cancer survivors, and friends. On Sunday, he led the foundation's annual ride with his friend Robin Williams, a surprisingly fit and aggressive cyclist. Williams and Armstrong rode at a fairly rapid pace for about two hours, at which point a car suddenly pulled up alongside them on the highway. Armstrong hopped off his bike, climbed in, and was driven to the airport to catch a plane for New York and then Paris. During his forty-eight-hour drop-in, the Lance Armstrong Foundation raised nearly three million dollars.

In Austin, Lance (other than Dubya, he is the only one-name Texan) has a more devoted following than Bush, Lyle Lovett, and the Texas Longhorns football team combined. One night during my weekend in Austin, I drove over to Chuy's, an informal Tex-Mex place that is one of Armstrong's favorite local restaurants. (It was famous locally even before a hardworking bartender carded President Bush's nineteen-year-old daughter Jenna.) Armstrong has a weakness for Chuy's burritos. I asked my waiter what he thought of Armstrong. "When he walks in here, you can feel the buzz coming right off him," he said. "When Lance shows up, people are delirious. They love the guy. His life is like an Alamo-level myth, and everybody loves a myth, particularly in Texas."

Armstrong tries to resist being described as a hero of any kind. "I want my kids to grow up and be normal," he told me, backstage at the concert, as he tentatively ate exactly two Dorito chips. He and his wife, Kristin, have three children: a son, Luke, who is two, and twin girls, Isabelle and Grace, born last year. "I want them to think their father worked hard for what he got, not that it was the result of some kind of magic," Armstrong said.

Three types of riders succeed in long stage races like the Tour de France: those who excel at climbing but are only adequate in time trials, in which a cyclist races alone against the clock; those who can win time trials but struggle in the mountains; and cyclists who are moderately good at both. Now there appears to be a fourth group: Armstrong. He has become the best climber in the world, although he wasn't much of one in his early years. And there is no cyclist better at time trials. He lost nearly twenty pounds when he was sick, but he is no less powerful and is therefore faster. Still, many people have wondered how, so soon after a nearly fatal illness, he managed to take such complete control of the sport.

"After the cancer, Lance got a second chance," Carmichael explained to me. "It was that simple. You get a second chance at something that you took for granted before and all of a sudden you see everything you could have lost. When he came back, he just went into a different zone. He works as if he is possessed. It's a little bit nutty, in fact, what he puts himself through so that he can win the Tour de France each year." As a young man, Carmichael was an Olympic cyclist himself, but he almost died in a freakish skiing accident, in 1986. He returned to competition, but something was gone. While he was trying to figure out what to do next, he took a job coaching the United States national team. He has now been training people for fifteen years. He works with many élite athletes in addition to Armstrong—runners, hockey players, even one Indy driver—

and also with thousands who just want to ride faster every Sunday with their local club. He has a company, Carmichael Training Systems, based in Colorado Springs, that employs more than seventy-five coaches; his clients, including Armstrong, log on to the company Web site to find their latest training instructions.

Carmichael believes that rigorous training is what ultimately turns a talented athlete into a star. "Who hits more practice balls every day than any other golfer?" Carmichael asked. "Guess what? It's Tiger Woods. Well, Lance trains more than his competitors. He was the first to go out and actually ride the important Tour stages in advance. He doesn't just wake up in July and say, 'God, I hope I am ready for this race.' He knows he is ready, because he has whipped himself all year long."

Armstrong describes his bike as his office. "It's my job," he told me. "I love it, and I wouldn't ride if I didn't. But it's incredibly hard work, full of sacrifices. And you have to be able to go out there every single day." In the morning, he rises, eats, and gets on his bike; sometimes, before a particularly long day, he waits to eat again (in order to store up carbohydrates) before taking off. "We schedule his daily workouts to leave late in the morning, so that he can ride for six hours," Carmichael said. "He returns home about five or six o'clock, in time for a quick dinner—a protein-carb smoothie, a little pasta. Then it is time for bed."

During the cycling season, Armstrong calculates each watt he has burned on his bike and then uses a digital scale to weigh every morsel of food that passes his lips. This way, he knows exactly how many calories he needs to get through the day. When he is racing, his meals are gargantuan. (It took three men to lug the team's rations—boxes full of cereal, bread, yogurt, eggs, fruit, honey, chocolate spread, jam, peanut butter, and other snacks—into the hotel breakfast room during the Dauphiné.) On days when a race begins at noon or later, Armstrong will eat two heaping plates of pasta and perhaps a power bar three hours before the race, after having had a full breakfast.

When I visited Carmichael in Colorado Springs, he showed me Armstrong's training schedule for a few weeks this spring. On April 28th, a Sunday, Armstrong competed in the Amstel Gold, a one-day annual World Cup race in Holland. He finished fourth, covering the two-hundred-and-fifty-four-kilometre course (which included thirty-three climbs) in six hours, forty-nine minutes, and seventeen seconds. His average speed was 37.32 k.p.h., the same as that of the winner, who beat him by about three feet. Carmichael scheduled a rest day and urged Armstrong to stay off his bicycle. "He almost never listens when I tell him to do that," Carmichael said. "But I tell him anyway." Tuesday was an easy day: a two-hour ride, maintaining an approximate heart rate of a hundred and thirty-five beats a minute. The next day was more typical: five hours over rolling terrain, with a heart rate of about a hundred and fifty-five beats a minute and an average effort of three hundred and twenty watts. Friday was a slow ride for two hours. Then, on Saturday, Armstrong rode for four hours with two climbs, each lasting about half an hour, during which he kept a heart rate of a hundred and seventy-five beats a minute with a power expenditure of about four hundred watts. After that, Carmichael had him draft at a fast rate behind a motorcycle for two hours without a break. In addition, Armstrong always stretches for about an hour a day, and during the off-season he spends hours in the gym, improving his core strength. "Nobody else puts himself through this," Carmichael said. "Nobody would dare."

WHILE YOU WERE IN
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Shanahan

I have been riding a bicycle since I was a boy, and over the years, as the technology improved, I kept trading up, from heavy steel to aluminum, and then to titanium. Only once have I travelled more than a hundred miles in a day; I have never entered a race (or wanted to), and I don't ride particularly fast. Yet, like a lot of middle-aged cycling enthusiasts, I now have a bicycle that is far better than I am and I have become a fetishistic devotee of the sport. I have never quite permitted myself to attend bicycle camp or to take lessons from a bicycle mechanic (though I have considered both). But I have never seen Campagnolo gears, an aerodynamically advanced set of wheels, or a complicated cycle computer that I didn't want to buy. My apartment is littered with catalogues advertising "carbon titanium supercycles," and bicycling magazines with stories about obscure pro races.

Every month or two, Carmichael tests Armstrong's capacity to generate power—or watts—and, when I told him that I rode a lot, he suggested that if he tested me in the same way I might have a better sense of what these measures really meant.

TO ASHES

All the green trees bring
their rings to you
the widening
circles of their years to you
late and soon casting
down their crowns and into
you at once they are gone
not to appear
as themselves again

oh season of your own

from whom now even
the fire has moved on
out of the green voices
and the days of summer
out of the spoken
names and the words between them
the mingled nights the hands
the hope the faces
those circling ages dancing
in flames as we see now
afterward
here before you

oh you with no
beginning that we can conceive of
no end that we can foresee
you of whom
once we were made
before we knew ourselves

in this season of our own

—*W. S. Merwin*

Our plan was to cruise up into the mountains not far from Carmichael's office, in a converted grain barn in downtown Colorado Springs. The wind was strong enough so that he asked if I wanted to reconsider. The answer was yes, of course, but that's not what I said. We rode for about five miles through the thin air six thousand feet above sea level. Carmichael chatted the whole time—about pedal motion, femur length (the longer the better, since length improves leverage), gearing choices, and the finer details of carbon-fibre technology. I gasped and answered only when I had to. We rode into North Cheyenne Cañon until, finally, it looked as if we had ridden as far as he could ask me to go. Carmichael got off his bike. "Now the test begins," he said. He pointed at the mountain slope—it wasn't as steep as some of the slopes in France, but it looked unconquerable nonetheless—and said, "I want you to ride as fast as you can up that road for ten minutes and then come back."

I was seriously winded within two minutes. My legs were burning within five. I remember watching four men and women climbing a steep rock face and rappelling down. They waved at me, but I was far too light-headed to risk lifting an arm from the handlebars. Finally, I couldn't take it anymore. (I managed to continue for eight minutes and thirty-two seconds. Naïvely, I had asked Carmichael what I should do when I reached the top. "You won't be seeing the top," he had said.) I turned the bike around and met up with Carmichael, and we coasted most of the way back to the office. Then we looked at my data: I had generated an average of two hundred watts on the test, and had climbed exactly one mile. Carmichael told me that a decent pro cyclist would have put out at least four hundred watts, and that the stragglers at the end of the *peloton* (known as the *gruppetto*) would clock in at perhaps three hundred and fifty. Armstrong—in top Tour shape—would have come close to five hundred.

I stared at the graph of my performance, which Carmichael and his colleagues had printed out for me. I had managed to generate four hundred and seventy watts for just ten seconds. That's about average for Armstrong over the course of a four-hour ride.

After that humbling experience, I went across town to see Edmund Burke, a former physiologist for the U.S. Olympic cycling team, who has written several books on training for cyclists (including one with Carmichael). "I think the genius of Chris is that he understands how much small gains matter," Burke said. "In fact, small gains are all you will ever see. People will say, 'You have shown only half a per cent of improvement.' Well, half a per cent is *huge*. I am not talking marketing or sales here. I am talking about élite athletic performance."

Carmichael takes nothing for granted and relies heavily on technology. (He noted with approval, for instance, that Greg LeMond won the Tour by just eight seconds, on the last day of the race, in 1989. He was the first cyclist in the Tour to use aerodynamically tapered handlebars for the final time trial. "It made all the difference," Carmichael said. "Technology might not win you the Tour. But why wouldn't you want to have the best chances possible?") Every few months, Armstrong trains in a wind tunnel, which allows Carmichael to measure his aerodynamic efficiency under a variety of conditions. He will push his seat back a centimetre or his stem up a few millimetres. (Each adjustment is a trade-off between power and speed; when you sit farther back, you can use more of your leg muscles, but you also expose more of your body to the resistance of the air.)

Carmichael takes the same radical approach to the physical limits of endurance. It had long been assumed, for example, that aerobic power doesn't vary greatly in adults. Carmichael refutes this emphatically. "Look at Lance," he said to me in his office one day. Over the past eight years, through specific programs aimed at building endurance and speed, Armstrong has increased this critical value—his aerobic power—by sixteen per cent. That means he saves almost four minutes in a sixty-kilometre time trial.

In fact, Armstrong is superior to other athletes in two respects: he can rely on his aerobic powers longer, and his anaerobic abilities are unusually high as well. When muscles begin to work beyond their aerobic ability, they produce lactic acid, which eventually accumulates and causes a burning sensation well known to anyone who has ever run too far or too fast. Somehow, though, Armstrong produces less lactic acid than others do, and metabolizes it more effectively. "For whatever physiological reason—and science can't really explain it, because we don't know that much about what is occurring—the effect is clear," Carmichael said. "Lance goes on when others are done."

At the end of last year's Tour, the French sports newspaper *L'Équipe* ran an article with the headline "SHOULD WE BELIEVE IN ARMSTRONG?," suggesting it was time to consider the possibility that, since Armstrong has never been found guilty of doping, he may indeed be innocent.

After I watched Armstrong train and spent time with his coaches, the only way I could be convinced that he uses illegal drugs would be to see him inject them. After all, the doubts about him have always been a function of his excellence. Greg LeMond, America's first Tour de France champion (he has also won three times), put it well, if somewhat uncharitably, after Armstrong won the 2001 Tour: "If Lance is clean, it is the greatest comeback in the history of sport. If he isn't, it would be the greatest fraud." It is impossible to prove a negative, and so Armstrong can do nothing to dispel the doubts. But his frustration is clear; in 2000, he made a television ad for Nike in which he said, "Everybody wants to know what I'm on. What am I on? I'm on my bike, busting my ass six hours a day. What are you on?"

If the French don't approve of Armstrong, it is not only—or even principally—because they suspect him of using drugs. They don't believe that he suffers enough. French intellectuals love the agony displayed on the roads each July in the same way that American writers love to wail over the fate of the Red Sox. Thirty years ago, before much was known about sports nutrition, riders would finish the race—if they could—having lost twenty pounds, their eyes vacant even in victory. Armstrong represents a new kind of athlete. He has been at the forefront of a technological renaissance that has made European cycling purists uncomfortable. Referring to the gulf that now exists between the race and the racers, the French philosopher Robert Redeker has written, "The athletic type represented by Lance Armstrong, unlike Fausto Coppi or Jean Robic"—two cycling heroes from a generation ago—"is coming closer to Lara Croft, the virtually fabricated cyber-heroine. Cycling is becoming a video game; the onetime 'prisoners of the road' have become virtual human beings . . . Robocop on wheels, someone no fan can relate to or identify with."

"It's so funny to hear people talk that way about Lance," Craig Nichols, Armstrong's oncologist, told me. "The fact is that no cyclist can have seen more pain than he has. The hard work and the inconvenience of the Tour just can't scare him, because he has been through so much worse."

Despite Bruyneel's warning not to push himself on the treacherous slope of the Col de Joux Plane, Armstrong was spinning the pedals a hundred times a minute, faster than any other competitor. (This cadence is a technique that he, Carmichael, and Bruyneel have been working on for years.) With just two days to go, Armstrong was in the lead of the Dauphiné Libéré, and there was little doubt that he would go on to win the race. ("There are not so many guys left," Bruyneel said to me with a smile and a shrug. "If he feels good, you have to let him go.") It would have been understandable—maybe even smart—for Armstrong to take it slow just a few weeks before the Tour. Yet clearly he wasn't going to be satisfied unless he also took this stage.

"Good job, Lance!" Bruyneel cheered into the radio. "Go! Go! Go!" Armstrong picked up speed; he was dropping his opponents one by one. "Moreau is done, Lance, he is over!" Bruyneel shouted into the radio as Armstrong whizzed by Christophe Moreau, the lead rider for Crédit Agricole. "Go if you can. But, remember, the mountain is not your friend."

"Kivilev is dropped, Kivilev is dropped!" Bruyneel screamed, as Armstrong began to pedal faster. "Lance, get on Menchov's wheel. He is a great train to the top." Denis Menchov, of the Ibanesto.com team, is a fine climber. Bruyneel had hoped that Armstrong would glide in behind him and conserve energy on the way up. Instead, Armstrong blew past Menchov, and then overtook the last two men between him and the summit. He wove through the fans gathered at the top of the mountain.

Armstrong shifted into a higher gear to descend, and suddenly he was in trouble. His radio stopped working, his leg began to cramp, and Kivilev and Moreau were gaining on him. "Twenty-seven seconds," Bruyneel said. He was screaming. "Lance, they are gaining!" We could see the little ski resort of Morzine in the near distance. Chalets were built everywhere into the steep slopes of the mountain. The thickening wall of fans suggested that we must be near the end, but we were driving so fast that it was hard to tell.

Incredibly, Bruyneel drove right up beside Armstrong. He was in pain and was massaging his thigh while pedalling as fast as he could. "Six seconds!" Bruyneel shouted out the window at full speed. "*Move!*"

Armstrong barrelled across the finish line, six seconds before his rivals. He got off his bike and hobbled directly into a tent that had been set up for drug testing. When he emerged, he came over to say hello. I congratulated him on winning the stage. "It's always fun to win," he said, smiling broadly. "But, man, I am in such agony." ♦

PORTFOLIO

AFTER THE TOWERS

Nine artists imagine a memorial.

BY CALVIN TOMKINS

The agonizing work of cleanup and recovery at Ground Zero, which ended officially a month ago, was carried out by men and women whose shared purpose made them a united force. Now comes the far more controversial job of rebuilding. The Lower Manhattan Development Corporation is about to release up to six detailed proposals for the site, with public hearings to follow. A separate design process will eventually lead to the selection of a memorial to the victims, but community organizations, victims' families, business interests, the city, Governor Pataki, and other interested parties are anything but united about the nature, the size, and the location of this key element. With that in mind, we asked several artists to think about the void downtown—not so much to design a memorial but, rather, to conjure up visions, with no constraints regarding cost, scale, or feasibility. The results, a selection of which are reproduced here, were gratifyingly unfettered, diverse, and a long way from what a committee would think up or reality permit.

Artists seem to have a direct line between mind and eye. Who else would plant a dairy farm down there, with twin red silos and contented cows grazing right up against the rebuilt Cortlandt Street subway entrance? In this case, it's two artists, Vitaly Komar and Alex Melamid, born in Moscow and transplanted to studios in lower Manhattan, where they work on joint projects marked by an incisive, ironic wit. "This is a very intense area," Melamid, whose apartment is one block from Ground Zero, says. "We need something pastoral here, real cows, a smell of manure, and, of course, everything organically fed and grown and so forth. In the middle of hell, you know. The subway is real hell. Every city needs a milk farm."

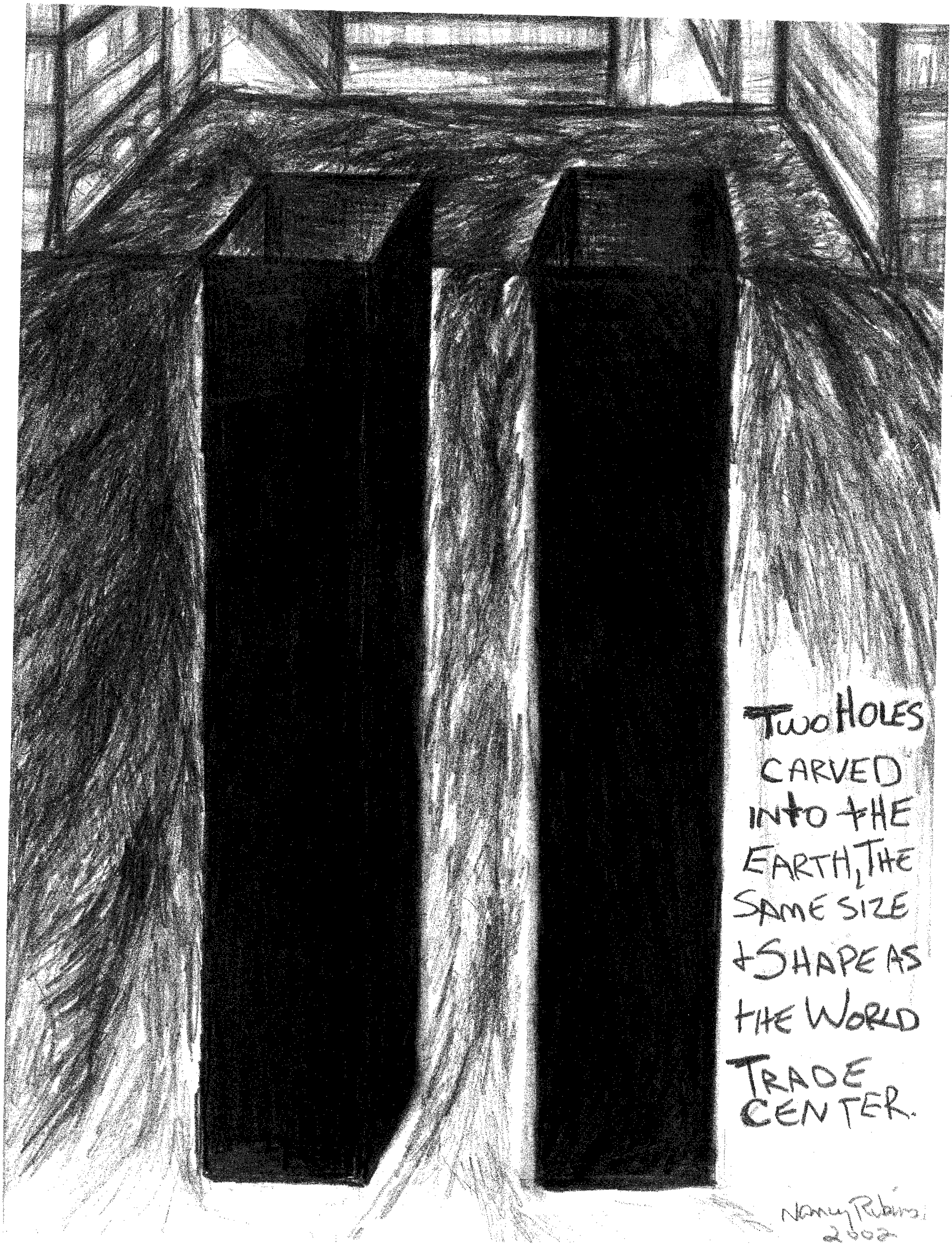
J. Otto Seibold, a multimedia artist and children's-book illustrator, came up with an interesting concept that links the ancient culture of Afghanistan with the vertical geometry of New York. Jenny Holzer would use her signature xenon-light projections to bathe two of the surviving World Financial Center buildings in a constant, nighttime stream of poetry and other texts, each one relevant in some way to the tragedy and its aftershocks. Nancy Rubins, a California-based sculptor of found-object constructions, who admits that she doesn't like to go above the second floor of a building, had the notion of going down instead of up—a hundred and ten stories down into the lower-Manhattan bedrock, where the remembered shape of the Twin Towers would be forever safe from aerial attack, and where their phenomenal presence, unseen but not unfelt, might serve to counterbalance the hectic ephemerality of life aboveground.

That sense of uncertainty, of the isolated and compartmentalized quality of urban life, hovers over the strange labyrinth in Alice Aycock's drawing. "When I try to take in the entire event," Aycock, whose work is often designed for public places, says, "I think first of that moment when someone is on the phone, doing business, doing some stock trading, maybe, or calling the family, and suddenly there you are, stopped in time. I saw it as a section of all those different labyrinths, unable to communicate with each other." Can there be, conversely, too much communication? Tony Oursler's proposal, the darkest and most ambiguous of those received, is for twin scaffoldings with video screens on which all the film and video coverage of the disaster from all sources would be projected, in a continuous loop from the moment the first jet exploded into the north tower until both structures collapsed. Oursler, one of the most original video artists at work today, conceded that his piece can be seen as a comment on our obsession with the media's endless replaying and reprocessing of reality. "A lot of young people I know don't want to see any more of that footage," he said. "They're fed up with it." His saturation screening could run for a limited time, and then "maybe it should all be buried," he suggested. "It should consume itself."

There is no trace of ambivalence or irony in Elyn Zimmerman's quiet, elegiac design for two reflecting pools on the site of the vanished towers. One mirrors the site as it is, or will be; the other gives back what was, in images projected onto the surface that show the Twin Towers at different times of the day and night. Zimmerman is another artist who frequently does commissioned works for public places. Her sculptural memorial to the victims of the first World Trade Center bombing, installed on the plaza between the towers, was destroyed on September 11th, but a small fragment was recovered and is being preserved by the Port Authority.

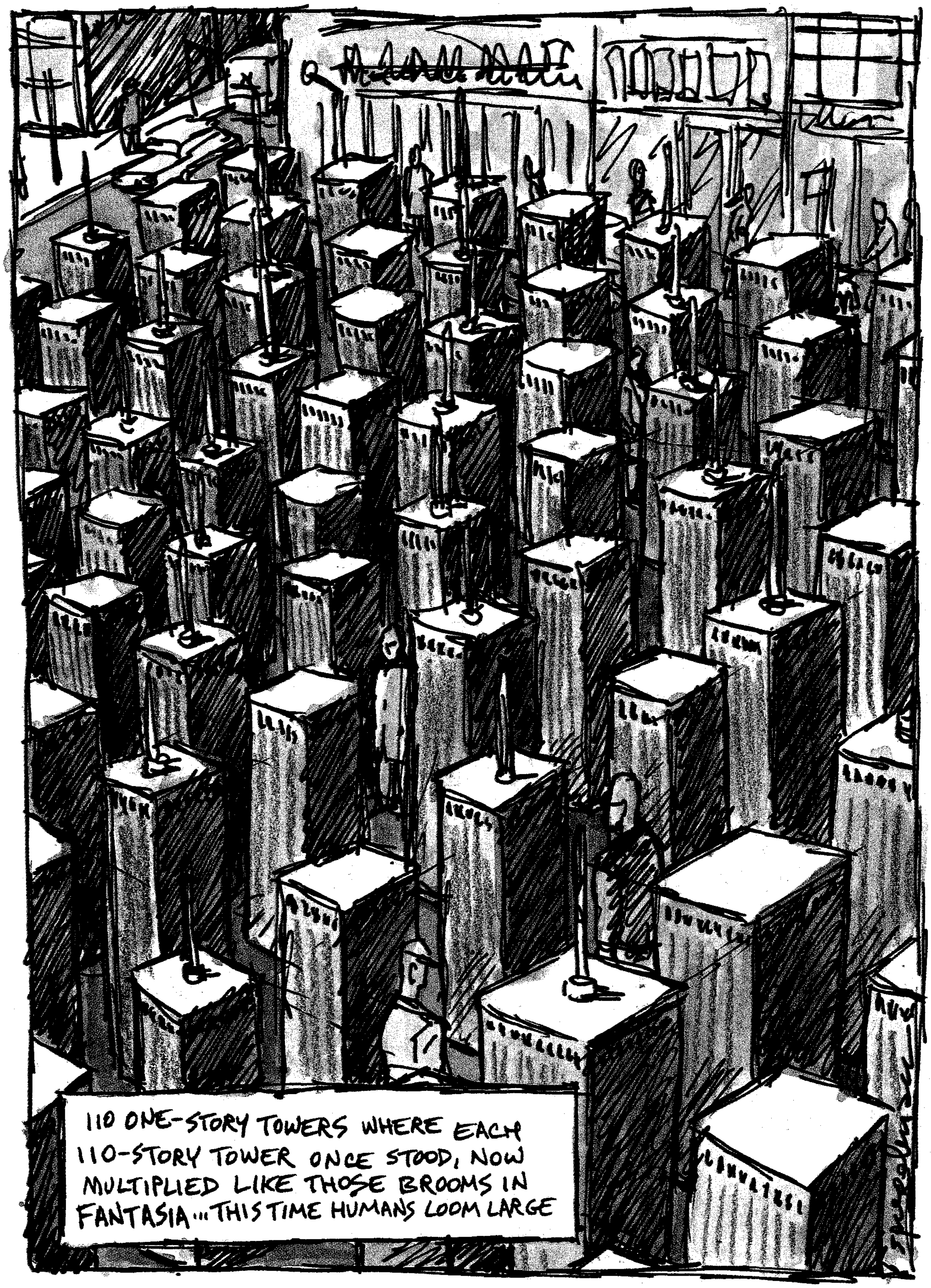
Like most of the artists who participated in the project, Art Spiegelman lives close to the site. The idea of replacing the twin hundred-and-ten-story towers with a forest of a hundred and ten one-story towers suggests those cheesy replicas of the Empire State Building found in tourist traps along Forty-second Street, but Spiegelman's range of allusion doesn't stop there. He really misses the old towers, even though he wasn't too crazy about them before. "It's not like I love the way my nose looks," he said. "I just don't want somebody ramming a plane into it. Anyway, the idea of being able to bring them back in a more manageable way was in there someplace. One could learn to live with them and look them in the eye." ♦

NANCY RUBINS

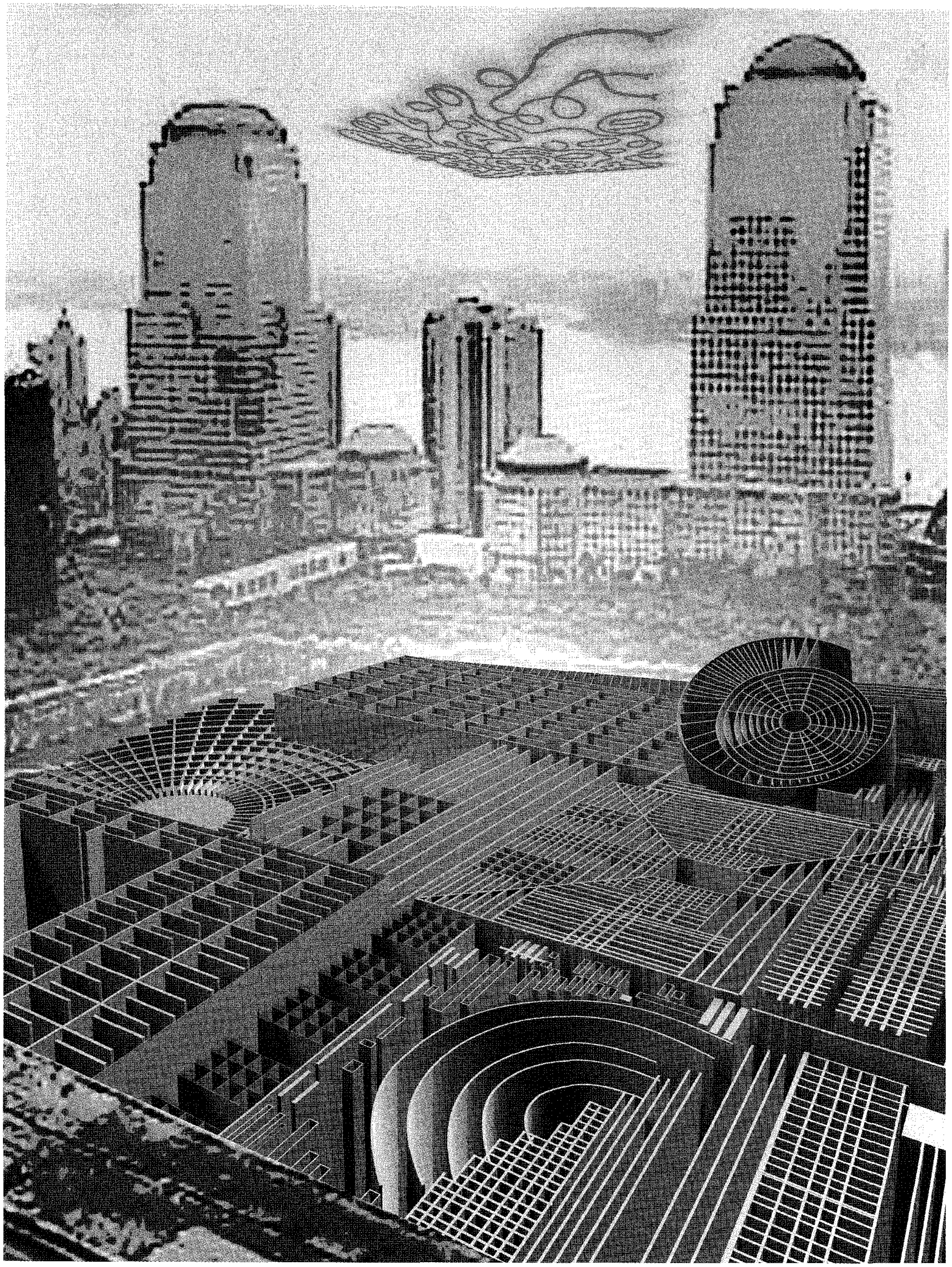

TWO HOLES
CARVED
INTO THE
EARTH, THE
SAME SIZE
+SHAPE AS
THE WORLD
TRADE
CENTER.
Nancy Rubins
2002

Rubins would put the towers underground, where they would be safe from attack and balance the hectic life above.

ART SPIEGELMAN


110 ONE-STORY TOWERS WHERE EACH 110-STORY TOWER ONCE STOOD, NOW MULTIPLIED LIKE THOSE BROOMS IN FANTASIA... THIS TIME HUMANS LOOM LARGE

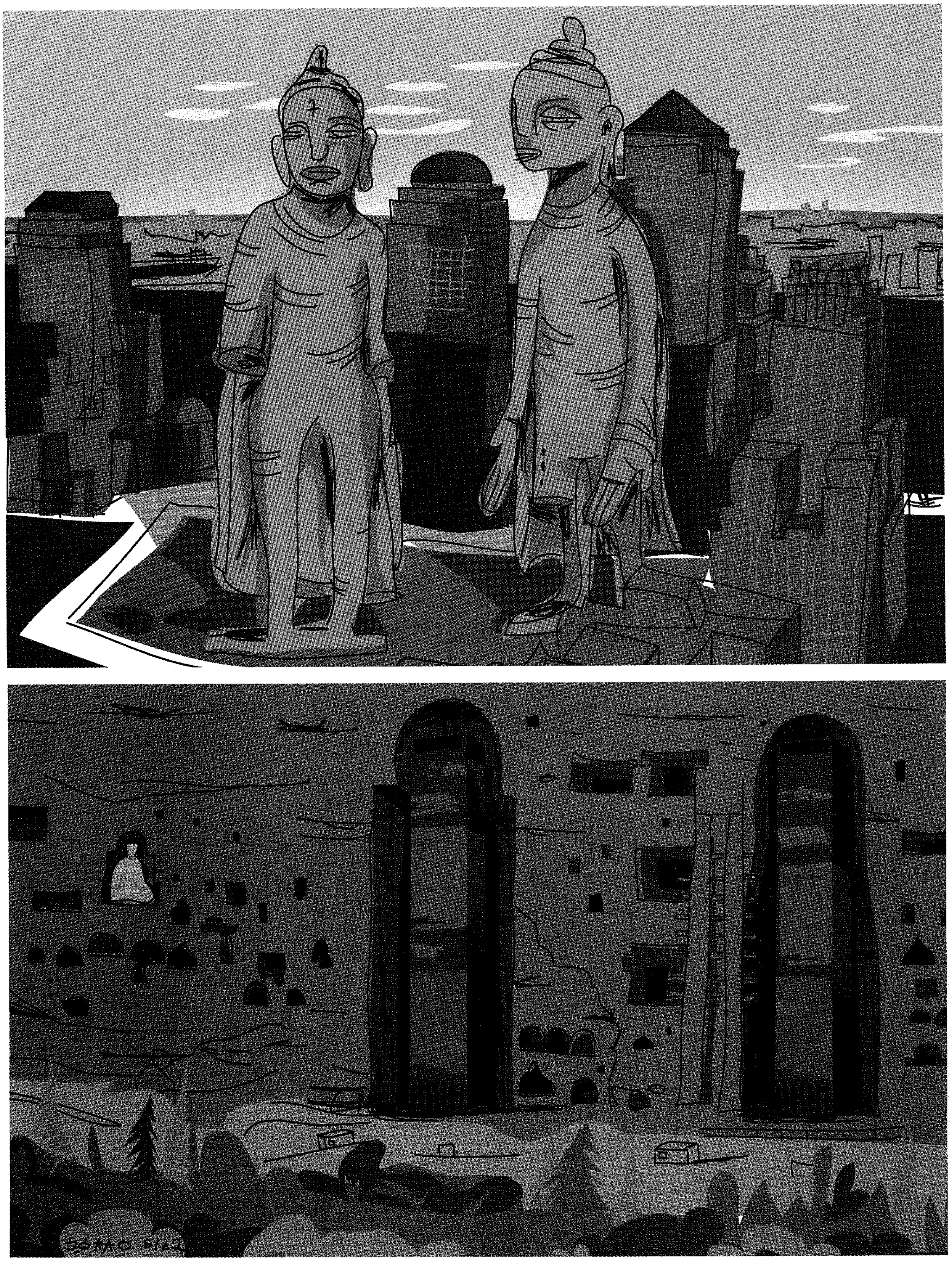
In Spiegelman's design, the towers, although fragmented, have managed to survive, and continue to define the Trade Center site.



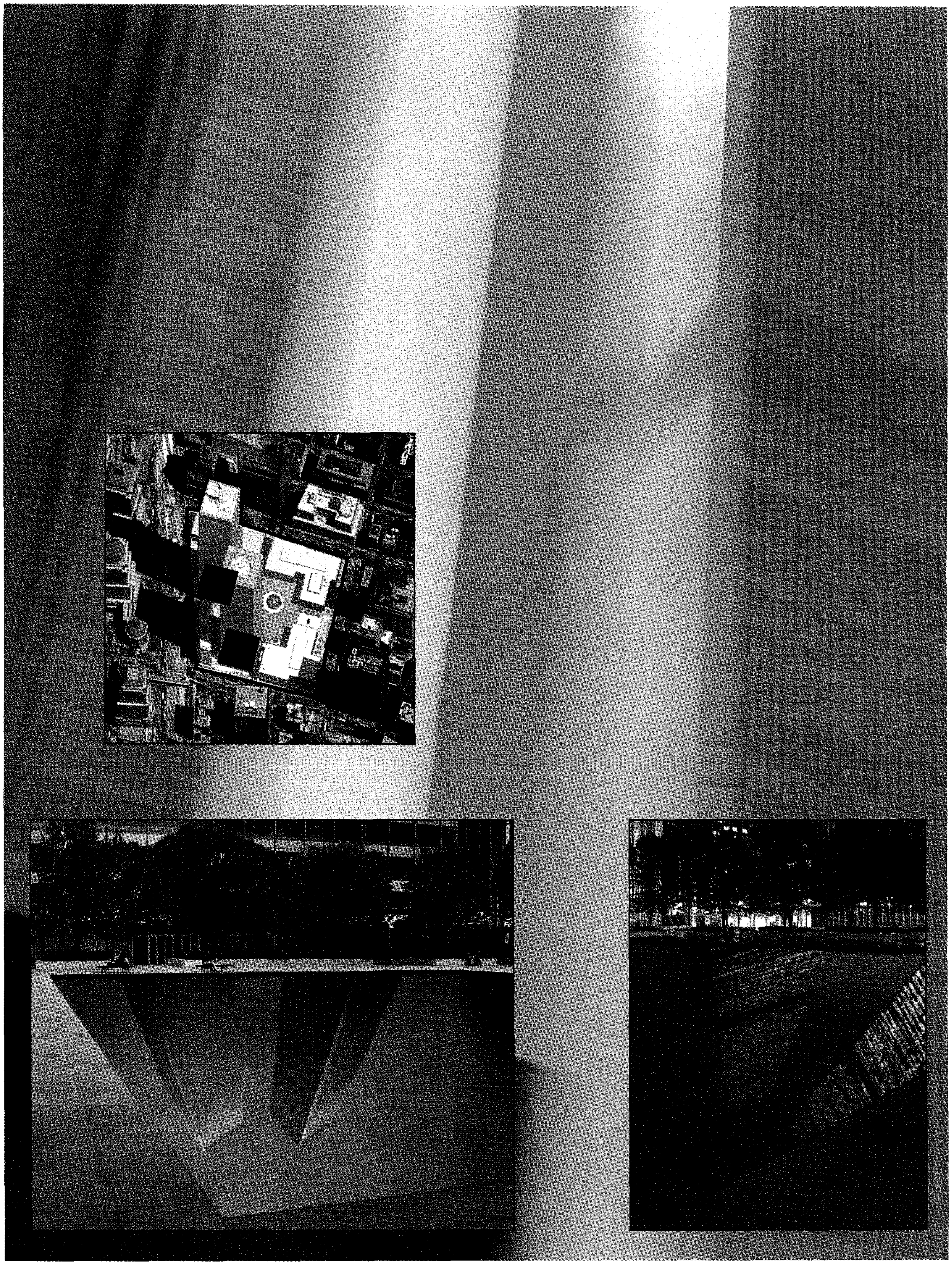
GRAPHICS: MARK WATKINS

The moment of the disaster, "stopped in time," for Aycock, recalled "different labyrinths, unable to communicate with each other."

J. OTTO SEIBOLD

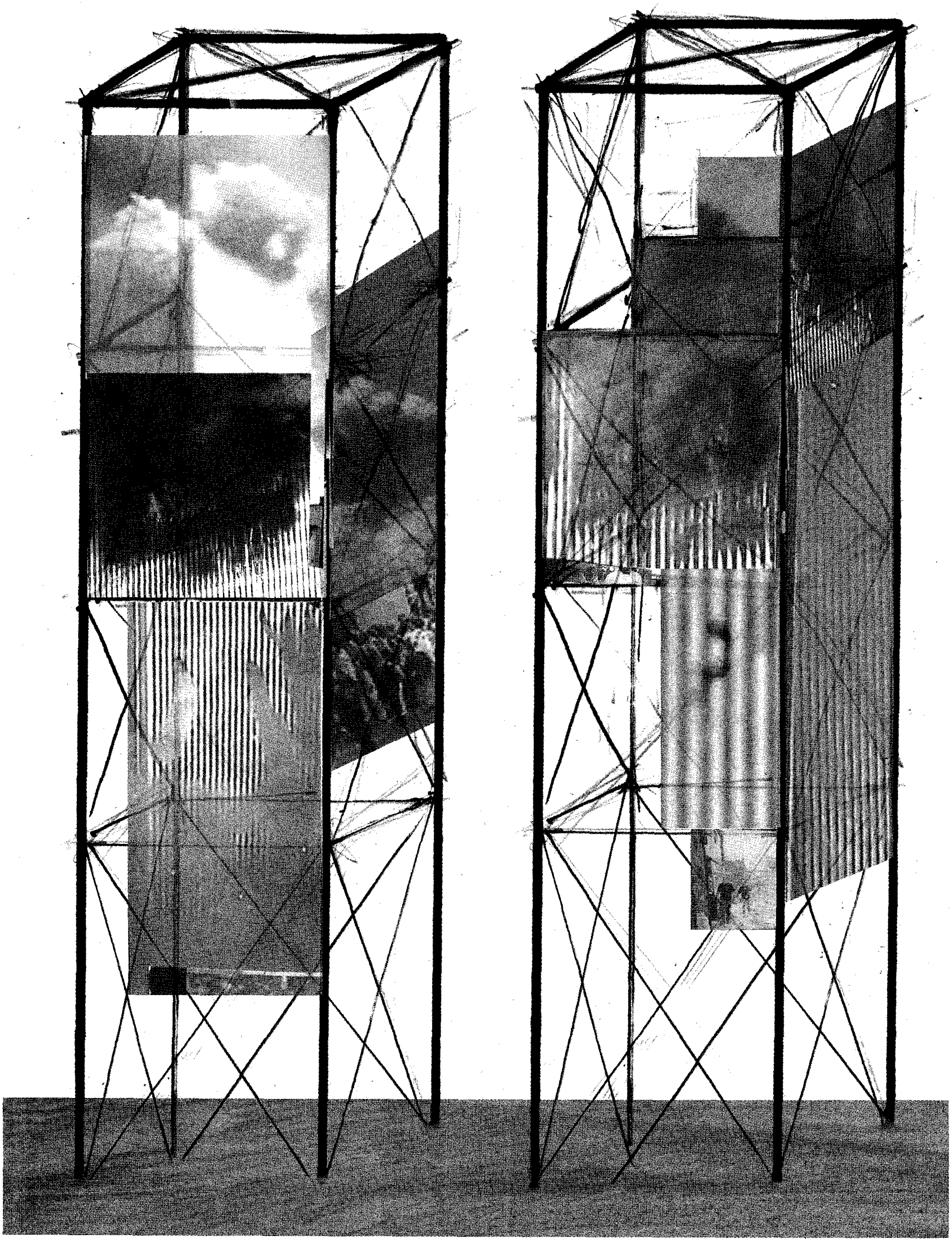


The Buddhas destroyed by the Taliban are envisioned in New York, and the towers house refugees in Bamiyan, Afghanistan.



GRAPHICS: MATHEW SANDAGER; PHOTOGRAPHS: SPACE IMAGES (TOP) AND CORBIS

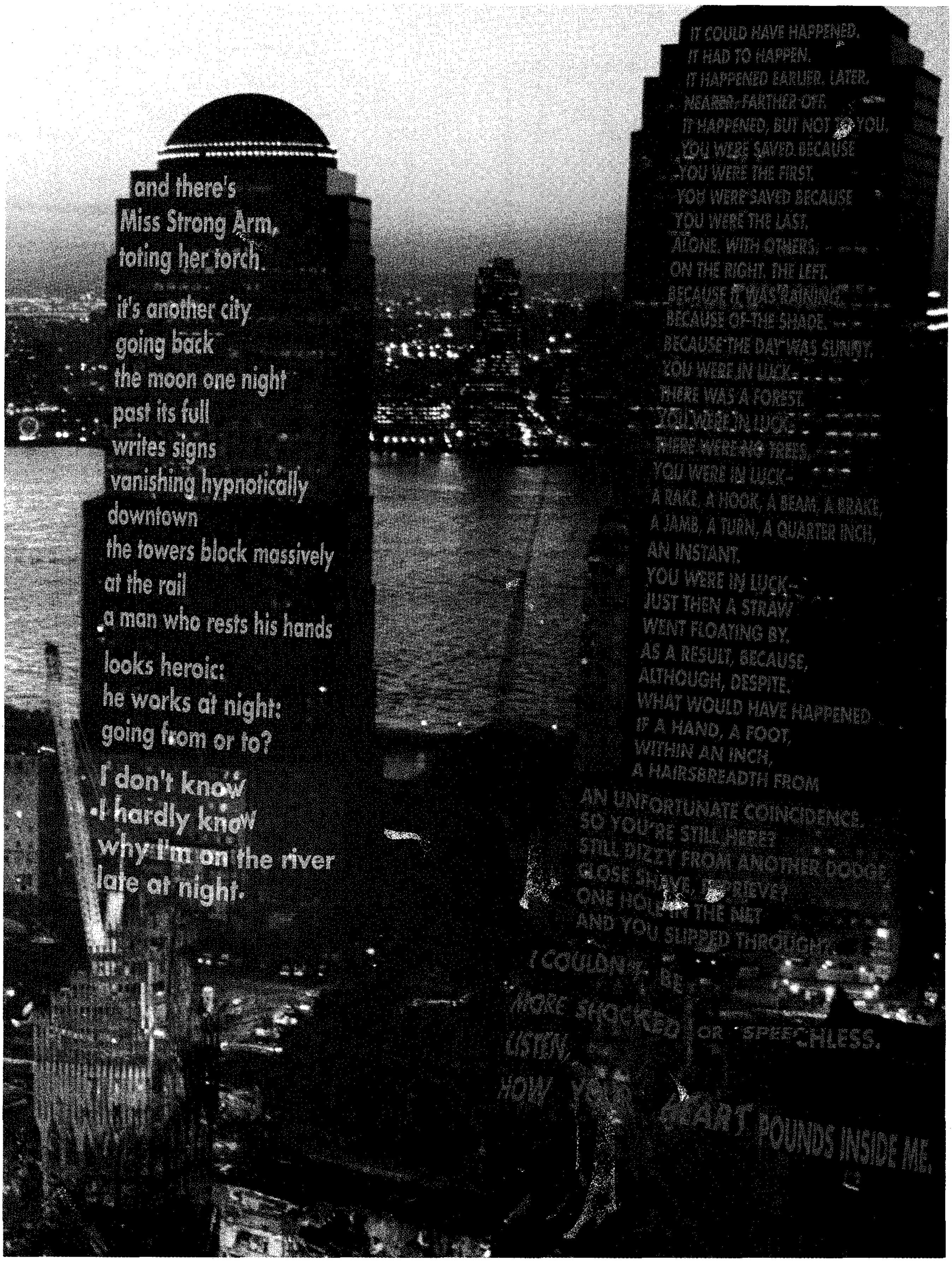
Zimmerman says of her twin pools, "One reflects the world as it is. In the other, projected images create a mirror of memory."



TOP LEFT AND BOTTOM RIGHT: EVAN FAIRBANKS/MAGNUM

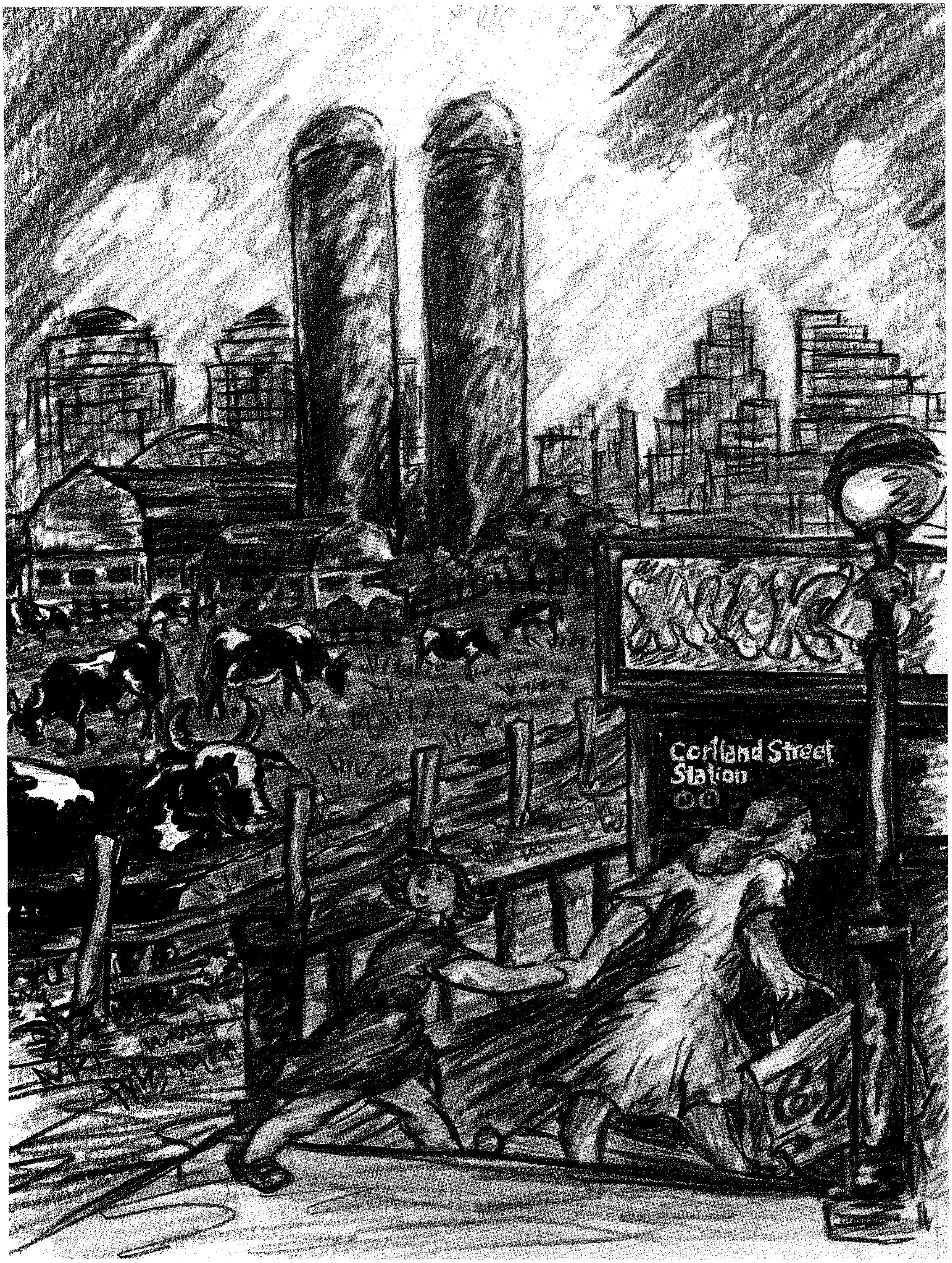
On Oursler's scaffolding, videos would play in a continuous loop, from the first crash, in the north tower, to the final collapse.

JENNY HOLZER


and there's
Miss Strong Arm,
toting her torch.
it's another city
going back
the moon one night
past its full
writes signs
vanishing hypnotically
downtown
the towers block massively
at the rail
a man who rests his hands
looks heroic:
he works at night:
going from or to?
I don't know
I hardly know
why I'm on the river
late at night.
IT COULD HAVE HAPPENED.
IT HAD TO HAPPEN.
IT HAPPENED EARLIER. LATER.
NEARER. FARTHER OFF.
IT HAPPENED, BUT NOT TO YOU.
YOU WERE SAVED BECAUSE
YOU WERE THE FIRST.
YOU WERE SAVED BECAUSE
YOU WERE THE LAST.
ALONE. WITH OTHERS.
ON THE RIGHT. THE LEFT.
BECAUSE IT WAS RAINING.
BECAUSE OF THE SHADE.
BECAUSE THE DAY WAS SUNNY.
YOU WERE IN LUCK—
THERE WAS A FOREST.
YOU WERE IN LUCK—
THERE WERE NO TREES.
YOU WERE IN LUCK—
A RAKE, A HOOK, A BEAM, A BRAKE,
A JAMB, A TURN, A QUARTER INCH,
AN INSTANT.
YOU WERE IN LUCK—
JUST THEN A STRAW
WENT FLOATING BY.
AS A RESULT, BECAUSE,
ALTHOUGH, DESPITE.
WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED
IF A HAND, A FOOT,
WITHIN AN INCH,
A HAIRSBREADTH FROM
AN UNFORTUNATE COINCIDENCE.
SO YOU'RE STILL HERE?
STILL DIZZY FROM ANOTHER DODGE,
CLOSE SHAVE, REPRIEVE?
ONE HOLE IN THE NET
AND YOU SLIPPED THROUGH?
I COULDN'T BE
MORE SHOCKED OR SPEECHLESS.
LISTEN,
HOW YOUR HEART POUNDS INSIDE ME.

GRAPHICS: BRENDA PHELPS; PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID FEIN; LEFT: ©1993 ESTATE OF JAMES SCHUYLER, COURTESY F.S.G., LLC
RIGHT: TRANSLATION, STANISLAV BARANCZAK AND CLARE CAVANAGH ©1995 HARCOURT, INC. ©1975 CZYTELNIK

"Hudson Ferry," by James Schuyler, and "Could Have," by Wislawa Szymborska, are projected on surviving buildings.


Cortland Street
Station

"This is a very intense area," Melamid, whose studio is just a block from Ground Zero, says. "Every city needs a milk farm."

FICTION

FUN WITH PROBLEMS

BY ROBERT STONE

Hampton County locked them down in a nineteenth-century brick fortress of a jail, a penitential fantasy of red brick keeps and crenellations. The sight of it had twisted many a cocky smile. Citizens waiting at its marble stoop could contemplate the solipsisms of razor wire and the verse of all-weather civic poetry on the rosy keystone: "Learn to labor and to wait."

Most of the time, Peter Matthews, an aging attorney with the public-defender's office, liked the place for its spooky melodrama. On the days his presence was required there, he had a six-mile country drive to town. In summer or fall, when the weather was nice, it could be very pleasant. The unimproved road followed a high wooded ridge that enfolded the oxbows of a wide, slow-moving river. Corn and shade tobacco grew along the banks, and two of the switchbacks had preserved wooden bridges. In ice or wintry weather, the drive was work.

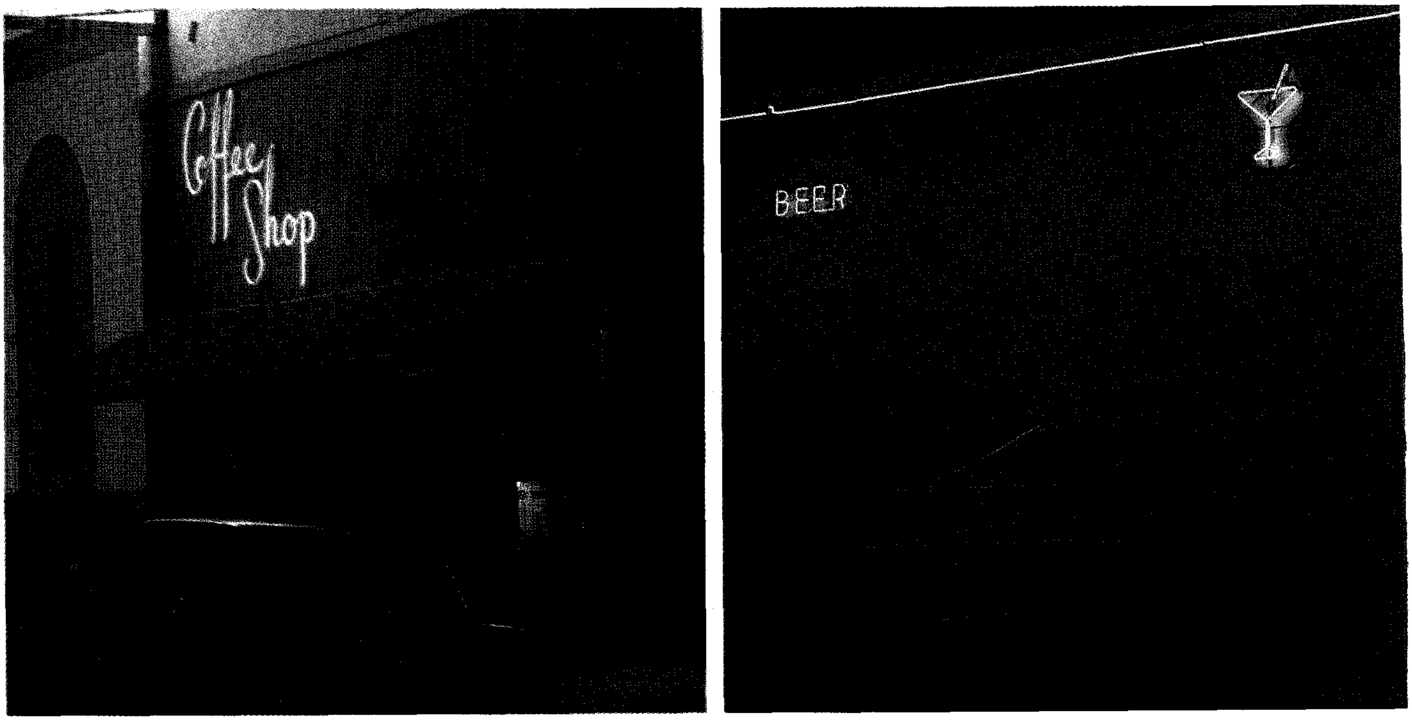
One Monday, toward the end of the football season, Matthews took a call from a young Cape Cod burglar called Georgie Laplace. Laplace, who was heedless and unlucky, had involved himself in the theft and disposal of some turquoise Hopi jewelry. To clear their books, the police on the Cape had constructed a useful narrative around him. Then they had transported Georgie clear across the state to Hampton's monster jail, where, it was hoped, he would succumb to homesickness and fear and endorse their version in court.

It was an outrage. In spite of the weather, Matthews decided to drive in.

On television, they were advertising the game later that night with file footage from Miami. Matthews lingered at the tube just long enough to glimpse the sunny margin of the field and get a blimp's-eye view of the shoreline. Since his divorce, he had been renting two rooms in a former bed-and-breakfast, a big farmhouse secured from the road by an absentee farmer's cornfields. It was a quiet place, comfortable enough when his mood was right. His fellow-tenants were a couple of retired New York schoolteachers who lived upstairs and a tall man named Stokely, a locksmith on salary from a local hardware store who drove the company car. Everyone got on well. Nodded greetings and agreeable observations were exchanged. The owners of the property, Mr. and Mrs. Esquivel, lived in another farmhouse, fifty yards off: they had fled Colombia in the grip of La Violencia and had little tolerance for conflict.

On his way to the carport, Matthews noticed Mrs. Esquivel's cold, experienced eye on him. Little escaped her.

He eased the car over the wet double track to the paved road and started on his way to town. The ride was faster and easier by interstate, but Matthews had his ritual commitment to the two-lane road. That wet afternoon, it gave him little pleasure. The horizon had closed around him, and he moved in the face of an icy rain that thickened on his wind-



JEFF BROUWS, "CENTRAL VALLEY BARS" (1995-2000)/ROBERT MANN GALLERY shield wipers. At the first stop sign, he skidded, ending up at a crazy angle to the yellow line. After that, he turned up the radio for company, but there were only call-ins. Whiners, know-it-alls, Christers. An alienated lot.

In the depths of his soul, Matthews hated Hampton County. The local press sometimes idealized the place as the Happy Valley. Matthews liked to amuse his friends by calling it the Unhappy Valley, and he had a repertory of cruel, funny anecdotes about it. At the same time, the Valley was a particularly easy jurisdiction in which to make a living. His ambitions had faded, and life could be various and perversely satisfying in Hampton. When Matthews launched into his Unhappy Valley routine it was his own life and fortunes he was describing, and most days he could tolerate those well enough.

In fact, the Valley was his native place, and he had been watching it all his life; its preachifying and its secret horrors. The recently arrived professionals, academics and technologists, had brought to Hampton a self-conscious blessed assurance, unaware of the beatings, arson, and murder that thrived in the hills around their white-trim shutters. Matthews knew the place's black heart. It was his living. Where the road descended to the river, a mile short of the first covered bridge, there stood a lone wooden tenement, the survivor of a company street of mill houses dating from the industrial age. All its companion houses had burned to the ground years before. Nearly every time Matthews passed the house, he saw children, a squadron of little whitey towheads who, in the time he had lived at the Esquivels', seemed to never change in age or approximate numbers. The house was unpainted and usually had one of its windows glazed in plastic.

Through the sleet, he saw one of the children standing in an open doorway, dressed for a summer afternoon. It was a girl of about ten, in baggy jeans and a yellowing, ragged hand-me-down T-shirt. She stood absolutely still, indifferent to the stings of the weather, unblinking. She wore a necklace of glass stones and shiny metal. Her stare was profound and uneasy-making.

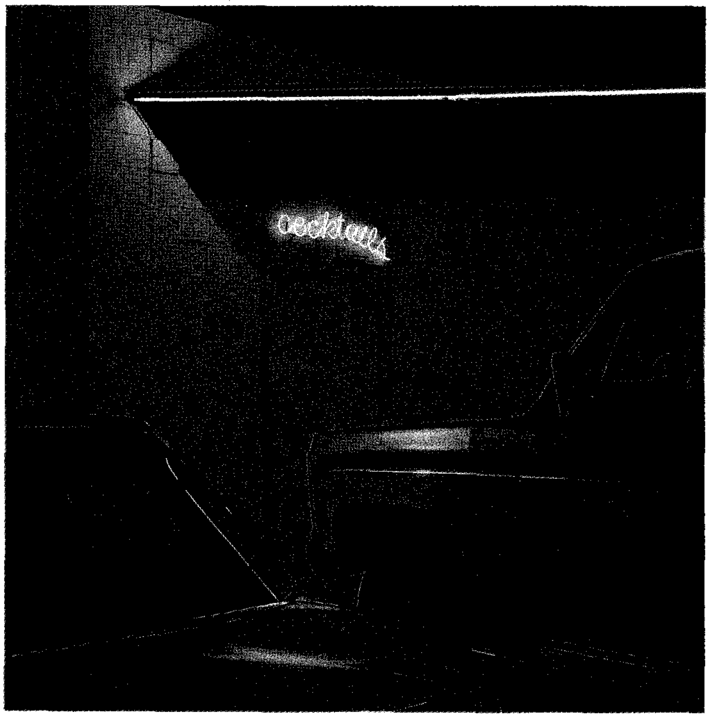
He waved to her, and she was gone. When he pulled out to cross the intersection, it was as though she had not been there.

He thought perhaps the solitude was finally getting to him, leaving him impulsive and eccentric, even on his sober days. Especially on his sober days, each one marked with small errors of judgment. The sight of children sometimes made him homesick for his married past, getting his son to school, drinking a beer with his wife.

During the seventies, everyone had said it was a tough time to bring up children; in fact, it went on being that way. The eighties and the nineties were no better. He and his wife had been lucky. Their only boy was sensible and decent, partaking of his mother's rectitude, and perhaps a little too much of his own "pessimism." So there was that at least. He called the thing he had pessimism.

Halfway up a hillside, a turn-of-the-century Volvo passed him with cheery disregard. Its bumper sticker read "We Are One Family," the town motto—the reference was to the imagined relationship between Hampton's inhabitants and those of the great globe itself, which was displayed in congenial artsy abstract, a smiley-face Planet Earth, complete with latitudes and longitudes. Was it more frightening to raise children in the place Hampton had become? He could hardly say; his perspective was that of a criminal lawyer who knew the annals of wickedness.

A couple of miles farther on, Matthews came in sight of town. The famous jail, the red brick rat-house minarets attached to a new wing of frosted Martian glass, stood beside the river, between a pair of old paper mills, whose lofts were now mainly occupied by artists in flight from the city. There were also a few shabby offices, headquarters to some social-services organizations. These were relics of the age of concern, grown decadent with underfunding, long on ideol-



ogy and short on practical solutions. One scarred band specialized in raiding the migrant-pickers' cockfights. A crazy poet did children's theatre the children dreaded.

Matthews parked his car in the sheriff's lot and eased up the marble steps to the old entrance. In a worn canvas case he had the recorded life and works of George Edgar Laplace. Settled in the lawyers' area, Matthews checked his records. At his previous arrest, the kid had been still too young for Hampton; the conditions of his sentencing specified some form of juvenile detention. This time they could keep him there.

As a child, George had been incorrectly diagnosed as retarded and spent years in the State School, equipped with all too much of the self-awareness he was supposed to have been spared. Some of the more dedicated teachers there had befriended him. But the school was run not by its staff but by inmate youths of perfectly adequate intelligence, eccentric only in their cruelty and unwanted at home. George inclined to drugs for self-medication. The drugs placed him in a criminal milieu, a quarter badly suited for such an unadventurous, asthmatic, overimaginative person.

Of course, Matthews thought, the system required Georgies. It might be that justice itself required Georgies.

He became a punk, a snitch, a white rat, Bacon's classic coward, the man never to be used honorably, since he respected only the threat of violence, who could, for the good vainly done him, return only treachery. Fear was his only friend and master. The wise hard-hearted English politician had correctly foretold Georgie Laplace—his soul was a slave's.

Poor Georgie, thought Matthews, fishing through the young man's paper. The guy's worst affliction was his sharp comprehension. He scudded around the state's jail system, with his intelligence soldered to his back like a bottle rocket pinned by a State School sadist to a frog. He even had the wit not to ask why. It made him interesting company. It made him worth fighting for sometimes.

Matthews and his client conferred in a chapel in the jail's old wing, a relic of gentler days. The chapel had been temporarily divided by partitions of wallboard and Plexiglas that reached a third of the way to the ceiling and were being slowly vandalized.

There were a couple of conferences in progress that afternoon, and quarters were close. The two guards, whom the inmates called "hacks," could hear every conversation from their station. Matthews' young client, across the misted plastic and dirty wallboard, looked frightened out of his wits.

Thirty-five feet away, at another partition, a maniac called Brand was in what looked like flirtatious conversation with a tall toothy red-headed woman. It was of Brand that Georgie Laplace was particularly frightened.

"He's gonna break my fingers, man," Georgie told his lawyer. "He said that. He told me he was gonna break my fingers at lunch."

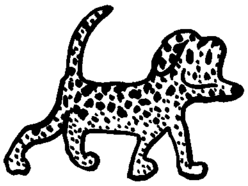
Georgie's half-whispered, stuttering terror was distracting to Matthews, who was trying to extract Georgie's particulars from a welter of false and misleading documents.

Matthews put his glasses on to look at Brand, a kind of local character, though quite a dangerous one. Matthews had seen him before: a man about thirty, powerfully built. He had curly blond hair that cascaded over his brows with cavalier deviltry. In spite of his silly fair mustache, girls, often to their subsequent regret, found him wicked cute.

Brand, without question, was destined for the hospital. The word on the block was that to get into the hospital you had to do something queer enough to make the tabloids. If you pulled weird shit, maimed some fuck, you might get hospital time. Matthews was also taken with the man's visitor, who seemed to represent the educated classes.

"Brand's gonna break my fingers, no shit," Georgie was saying.

Brand's visitor had laid out a set of tarot cards on the surface provided on her side of the barrier. She seemed to be charting her patient's destiny.



"Did he tell you he'd break your fingers?" Matthews asked.

"Fuckin'-A right he told me! He says, 'What you bet I can break your fingers? Not everybody could do it,' he says. 'Most wouldn't do it,' he says."

"So what did you say to that?" Matthews asked.

"What did I say? What would you say?"

"Keep your voice down," Matthews said.

The young woman sat very tall. She wore an ankle-length suède skirt and boots and a turtleneck top that favored, in Matthews' view, the swell of her small breasts and firm shoulders.

Matthews watched them. The woman was laughing at something Brand had said, and Matthews felt a rush of what he thought might be a very basic form of sexual jealousy. Here, safely confined, we had self-selected alpha man, recognizable by his readiness to snap off your digits on a whim, exchanging a few sexual signifiers with the condescending female of the species. It wasn't pretty, but it was the real thing.

"Hey, counsellor," Georgie wailed. Instinctively, he lowered his voice. "How about gettin' me out of this tank?"

"Lay low for a while," Matthew whispered. They both watched Brand. "You know how it's done. Hey, who's the broad with him? Not his wife?"

Georgie almost smiled. "She's a shrink, man. She's his shrink."

"With tarot cards?"

"She's, like, telling his fortune?" Georgie explained.

"O.K." Matthews told him. "Just stay away from him. Try not to attract his attention."

"Oh, yeah," Georgie said. "Good fuckin' luck."

"I'll have a word with the administration tomorrow. We'll get you moved. Trust me."

Georgie's face fell. "Tomorrow? I thought today. You got my hopes up."

"You're too much of an optimist. Some things can't be done in a day. Make it through the night," Matthews said. "You'll be O.K. tomorrow."

Matthews watched his client walk out of the chapel. And sure enough,

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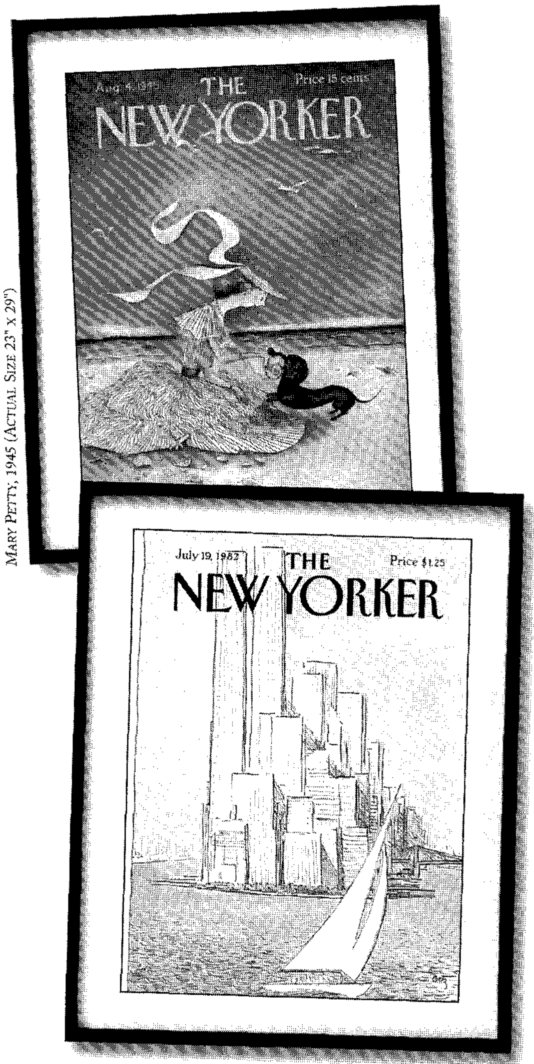

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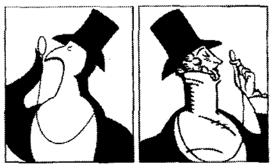

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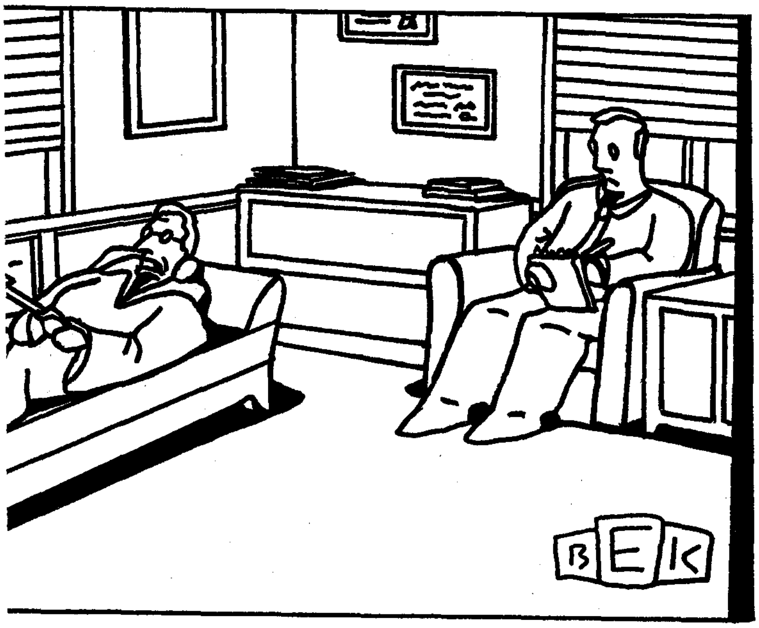

"And I don't seem any closer to figuring out why I'm not granting my own wishes."

• •

arlie." She stroked the cat
n and looked at Matthews.
awyer, are ya?"
e," Matthews said.
an was called Sister Sophia.
in or an ex-nun; Matthews
ot it quite clear. She func-
ocial worker, employed by
ighboring service agencies,
rison's Catholic chaplain.
she seemed a jolly soul. She
n many times before but
r to be able to distinguish
om another.
cat slung across her fore-
ked over the chapel, where
sychologist was carefully
r tarot deck in a beige silk
:
ething I don't like," the nun
ied the cat out through an
oor, released it into the of-
came back. "I see a lot of
— I don't want to use the

talking to me?" the red-
pist asked.
talking to you," the nun
lo you think you're doing,
you're playing cosmic Mo-
"
ean my Tarot Oracle?" the
asked.

"That's right. I don't go for that kind of stuff."

"It's a therapeutic device," the young woman said. "The cards help them to talk about themselves." She turned for support to Matthews, who had been observing her. "It relaxes them."

Matthews thought her voice sounded local; her background was probably fairly humble, otherwise her family would have invested in some improving orthodontics for such a basically pretty girl.

"Maybe she's got something there," he told Sister Sophia, although he saw little point in making Brand crazier than he already was.

The lippy nun looked at Matthews for a moment and turned back to the psychologist.

"That stuff is diabolical superstition," she declared. "It stands between the soul and Higher Power." The gray cat came back through the metal doors to listen like a familiar. Unchallenged, the nun grew triumphalist. "Ha! Here she is," she said, nodding toward the psychologist, "supposed to be helping these kids!" She looked up and down the visiting area as though in search of a larger audience. "Tarot cards!" she cried. "Phooey!"

An elderly prisoner with a push broom came out behind the cat.

"We're fucking entitled," the old man said.

"You just watch your language, Bobby," the guard told him.

The young woman blushed. "They *are* entitled," she said. "They're entitled to any kind of therapy. And it does not interfere with Higher Power. Insight promotes it." The psychologist was pointing at the crucifix that still stood on the edge of the altar at the near end of the room. "What if I say that's superstition?" Addressing Matthews now, she startled the cat. "I bet it's unconstitutional. I mean, where's the wall of separation?"

"Well," Sister said, outraged and gesturing at the psychologist's cards, "I better not find any of these magic doozies around the plant, because I'll get 'em lifted."

"I'm sure you can do that, Sister," the red-headed psychologist said. "You serve the county instead of the inmates. You're a snitch."

Everyone was horrified.

"Did you hear her?" Sister Sophia asked the men. "Did you hear what she called me?"

In fact, it was generally believed that Sister Sophia—though a good enough egg in her own way—had her own interpretations of the unwritten laws. And that there were certain things better left uncommitted to her discretion.

"Maybe you should apologize to Sister Sophia," the hack said. "Ya went too far there."

"Heat of argument," Matthews said.

Sister Sophia gathered up the cat and fixed them each in turn with a dreadful wounded stare. She was a person completely of the jail, and the accusation was a mortal one. Matthews wondered how well the psychologist understood this. She seemed not to have been around for very long.

"More and more of my evenings seem to be ending at some stupid little place in Brooklyn."

Lights flashed. The amplified voice of the administration declared visitations concluded. The hack urged them out.

"Let's go home, folks."

Sister Sophia and Louey, padding underfoot, retreated up the stone passageway.

"After thirty years!" Sister Sophia said, following the big neutered tom up the dank stone hallway. "Thirty years in this crummy joint!"

"Just a misunderstanding," Matthews said to the young woman. He extended a hand. "Pete Matthews." Her name was Amy Littlefield.

They lingered in the severe darkwood reception room.

"You know," Matthews said, "your guy is threatening my client."

"Oh," she said. "He's always boasting. He told me the test of a tough guy was to break someone's fingers." A guilty smile appeared on her face and faded immediately. "He's trying in his way to impress me."

On Water Street, outside the jail, it was cold and cheerless. Fine hail was rattling against the streetlights and the steps of the jail.

"Impressed?"

"He needs to take his antipsychotics. He doesn't belong in there. I mean," she said, "what can you do?"

"I was wondering that. I'm worried about Georgie."

"Really? Your client looks tough."

"No," Matthews explained. "No. The last time he was in there," Matthews said, "he was underage. I got him out on habeas corpus. Now he thinks I'm a miracle worker."

"Good luck," she said.

They parted ways in the gathering sleet. Matthews took the river sidewalk with his shoulder to the force of the storm off the river. He followed the embankment, to the edge of the downtown mill buildings. Then he suddenly turned back and went in the direction that Amy had gone. When she heard him coming up behind her, she stopped and moved back from the sidewalk.

"What did you mean," Matthews asked, "he doesn't belong in there?"

She laughed. "What did I mean? I

meant he was crazy. He should be in a hospital.”

“Right.”

“Did you think I was taking his side? That I thought he was a nice guy?”

“I wasn’t sure. You’re a social worker.”

She shook her head.

He looked up and down the street and she watched. He thought she was about to ask him if he was looking for something.

“So, Amy,” he said, “would you like a drink?”

She laughed in a strangely embarrassed way. The quality of her embarrassment was somehow familiar to him.

“I don’t drink,” she said gaily. As though the statement did not necessarily foreclose sociability.

“Well,” he said, “have an *Apfel-schorle!*”

“I don’t know what that is.”

“You’ve fallen into the right hands,” Matthews said. The young psychologist stopped in her tracks. She shielded the lenses of her glasses from the icy rain with one hand and pulled her plaid scarf over her bright hair. Little hailstones clung to the russet strands like coral clusters, not melting.

“Wait a minute,” she said. “I haven’t fallen into your hands.”

“No,” Matthews said. “Of course not.” He was wondering whether she thought him too old for her. She did not seem much over thirty-five.

“Oh,” she said. There was another slightly embarrassed laugh. Like the first, it made him hopeful.

“I’m not surprised you’re a psychologist, Amy.”

“Really?” she asked, as they hurried out of the weather. “Why?”

He had only been mocking her. Matthews’ life had become so solitary he had almost stopped caring what he said, or to whom.

They went to the restaurant where, sober, Matthews had discovered *Apfel-schorle*, mixed apple juice and soda. The place was run by a German hippie who cooked and his American graduate-student wife. Its ambience was not at all gemütlich, but gray-black Euro-slick. The waitress was a stylish, sombre German exchange student.

“Funny,” Amy said, when they had ordered a *schorle* for her and a Scotch for Matthews, “that they’d still serve such a summer drink in the winter.”

Matthews agreed that it was funny.

“Aren’t you hungry?” he asked her.

She cast the question off with her peculiar gaiety. Matthews tried to inspect her further without being spotted. Her red hair seemed natural: she had the right watery-blue eyes and freckled skin. In her strong lean face, the long-lashed, achromatic eyes looked wonderfully dramatic. Effects combined to make her seem sensitive, innocent, and touchingly plain. Vulnerable.

Across the table, he indulged in some brief speculation about her character and inner life. Her facing down fatuous Sister Sophia was admirable in a way, but it was also self-righteous and overwrought. Pretty ruthless, really, calling the poor woman a snitch. And Amy herself seemed not much smarter than the nun, all fiery bread and roses, the blushing champion of free thought with her fucking wall of separation.

In fact, at that moment Matthews did not want to care what Amy was like. His life was lonely enough, but he was not shopping for a friend or a comrade in the service of the poor. His attraction to her was sensual, sexual, and mean, which was how he wanted it. Spite had taught him detachment. The trick was to carry on indifferent to his own feelings and without pity for things like Amy’s ditsy vagueness or the neediness she was beginning to display.

“Sure you won’t have something stronger?”

She shook her head. Now, he observed, she was all reticence and demurrals—no drink, no dinner, no nothing. Yet, on a certain level, he thought, she acted like someone who wanted to play.

“I liked your standing up to Sister Sophia,” Matthews told her, when he had his second drink in hand.

She did not seem entirely pleased by his compliment. For a few seconds, she only looked at him without speaking.

“I felt kind of sorry afterward. I shouldn’t have called her a snitch.”

“I wouldn’t worry about it. She’s a bully.” He watched her fidget unhappily on her big wooden chair. To make any progress it would be necessary to cheer her up. Win her over. “And she really is a snitch.”

“Oh, God,” said Amy. “That makes it worse.”

“Yes, it does,” Matthews said. He laughed at her in spite of himself. “Sorry.”

“So,” she said, “I was being stupid.”

“No, no. I admired what you did.” He felt a little ashamed of the contrived flattery. He had underestimated her.

“I was being pompous pious.”

“You were fine,” he said. “I don’t think you did anything inappropriate.”

“Inappropriate” had become such a useful word, he thought, so redolent of the spirit of the times. Everyone had dumb, disastrous moments and behaved inappropriately. Inappropriate anger led to attacks of bad judgment. Misplaced idealism was also inappropriate. And almost everyone had a little no matter how clean they were.

“Really?” she asked.

“Really,” he told her. “Have a drink.” Somehow the suggestion turned her around this time. Her state of agitated regret seemed to visibly depart. The look he saw in her pale eyes was suddenly challenging and flirtatious.

“No, I don’t think so,” she said firmly. The firmness had a pretended note.

The mournful fraülein desired them to stop fiddle-fucking, order dinner or go away. Matthews set her pouting with another drinks order. *Apfel-schorle* for the little lady, another Scotch for himself. Amy went to the Ladies.

When the drinks came, Matthews was reminded of the celebrations at a wedding he had attended the previous weekend. Someone had proposed the toast “*l’chaim*”—“to life.” There and then Matthews had decided it was a toast he would never, ever, willingly drink again. Not, of course, that he would make a scene about it. Returned, Amy thoughtfully considered her glass of juice.

“I’ve quit drinking for a while,” she announced. Matthews thought she might be getting admirable again. In fact, he realized, she was offering him a wedge. How much might he pry?

“I think you should make an exception this evening. Really,” he said. “You’ve been fighting the good fight.” The words were ill-chosen, he knew that. It was hard to stop making fun of her. The devil drove him. He labored to recoup. “I mean, you want to forget all that, right?”

“Well,” she said, in the manner of one about to explain thoroughly, “see, I’ve been doing a play.”

“A play?”

Amy told him about her second career. "I went to New York for a year," she said. "I did some off-off Broadway. I almost got Shakespeare in the Park."

"No kidding?"

"No kidding. It would have been fun."

"Shakespeare in the Park? Sounds like fun."

"But it was almost, right? No cigar."

A different Amy. Animation. Still, though, tinged with regret. "Anyway," Amy said. "I did some great stuff. Odets. Do you know Clifford Odets?"

"Sure. 'Waiting for Lefty.' "

"We didn't do that. We did two minor short plays. And we did a dramatic reading of 'John Brown's Body.' "

"Really? Who were you?"

"Don't tease me," she said. "Don't tease me about my year in New York."

"I wouldn't," Matthews said, because he had not been. "I think it's great."

"Well, not so great," she said, "because it's over and I have to make a living. And clinical psych is what I do."

"You do it very effectively."

"Yeah, sure," she said. It turned out she was not drinking because she thought alcohol interfered with remembering her lines. "I blank. I go up. You know, forget the cue and the line."

"I see."

"Drinking gives you these glitches," she said. For a moment, she put the tip of her tongue to her upper lip and looked around the place. There was one other occupied table. Two youngish faculty couples were finishing their chocolate cake. "I don't know, maybe it's just a superstition."

"I bet it is. What play are you doing?"

" 'Cymbeline.' It's Shakespeare."

"I'm not very familiar with it."

"No, it's not often performed. It's kind of ridiculous on the level of plot. But it has its moments."

"Why don't you join me," Matthews said. "Have a drink. And we'll have something to eat."

"Do I have to?" she asked.

Afterward, he would have to ask himself why he had pressed her so hard. As though it were the senior prom and she were a high-school virgin he wanted to addle with fruit wine. Asking him that way, she had seemed so gravely passive, supine, absurd. Asking for it. She would drink if he made her. So he did.

"Definitely."

"And what shall I drink?"

"What do you like?"

"I like margaritas," she said.

So they ordered her Teutonic margaritas, of which she consumed quite a few, straight up with salt, and a weight fell, finally, from her pretty shoulders. She told him about "Cymbeline," which, on the level of plot, *did* sound ridiculous. They laughed about that. But when she professed to discover the other levels, they grew properly serious. She had plainly thought a lot about it, and about her character, named Imogen, an apparently ridiculous figure.

"And what's strange," she said, "is to come from rehearsal, to come from Shakespeare to the life of all these young community males in the jail."

For a moment, he did not know what she was talking about. "Don't say things like 'young community males,' " he told her. "Don't use jargon."

She got huffy, blushed, and withdrew for a while. Ironic, because it was one thing said to her in friendship.

She lived in Hampton's old downtown, in what had been an office building but was now living space for a variety of the place's ambiguously connected people. "Nontraditional households," was how she would have put it.

"There's nothing to drink," she told him. "I don't keep it."

So they made a detour to the package store in the square to get Scotch, tequila, and cheap margarita mix.

Her apartment had high ceilings and many windows adorned with plants. He thought that in the daytime it must have lots of light. On one wall there were theatre posters and a few photographs of Amy in costume. He inspected them while, staggering ever so slightly, she went to change clothes.

In the kitchen, he worked loose her ice trays and made sloppy, over-boozy drinks. She came back in gray-green tights with a sort of short, hooded burnous a shade lighter. Her glasses had lightly tinted lenses; she had let her hair down. They sat one cushion apart on an outsized brown leather sofa that looked as though it had come from some dean's office at the local college.

Settled on the sofa, she did a little snug wiggle.

"Oh, I like leather." She leaned her head back happily, then turned to him. "But it makes you sweat."

That should have been the moment, but he was distracted by drink. He got anecdotal, told some favorite jailhouse horror stories at which they could laugh comradely progressive laughter. Not too many. The subject was too depressing, and he did not want to spoil things. Amy began to tell stories about some other place, a place she did not identify. A hospital? He paid closer attention.

"So there was a woman at this place where I was."

"What place?"

"A woman at this place," Amy went on, "but it wasn't a woman at this place."

"No?"

"No," Amy said. "It was me. It was"—she corrected herself with a humorous theatrical flourish. "It was I. It was a spa, right? A really expensive health spa. Ever been to one?" she asked him.

"Yes. Once."

She laughed at him, in the bag, unstoppable.

"I'm not talking about a drunk farm. Although I've been to those, too, I have to tell you."

"I have to tell you," he said, "I have, too."

"But this," Amy said, "the setting of our story was a very fancy desert health spa." She stopped and looked at him as though making sure she was among friends. Matthews did his best. "I was going to tell this as somebody else's story. But it was me."

"I see."

"Well," Amy said, "at this really expensive health spa there was a clairvoyant? The clairvoyant picked me. Me, right? He read my thoughts—that was the number."

His instinct was to stop her. A lawyerly impulse. A human one? He didn't.

"And the clairvoyant revealed to me,

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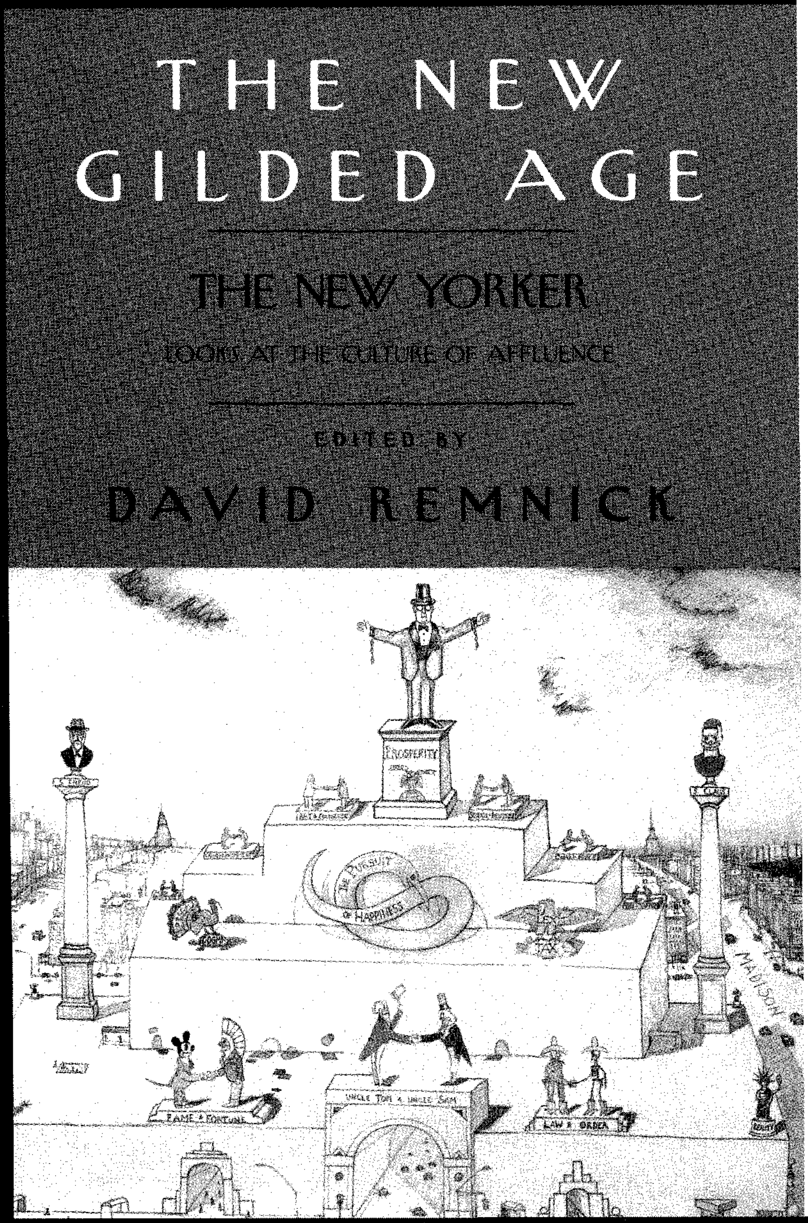
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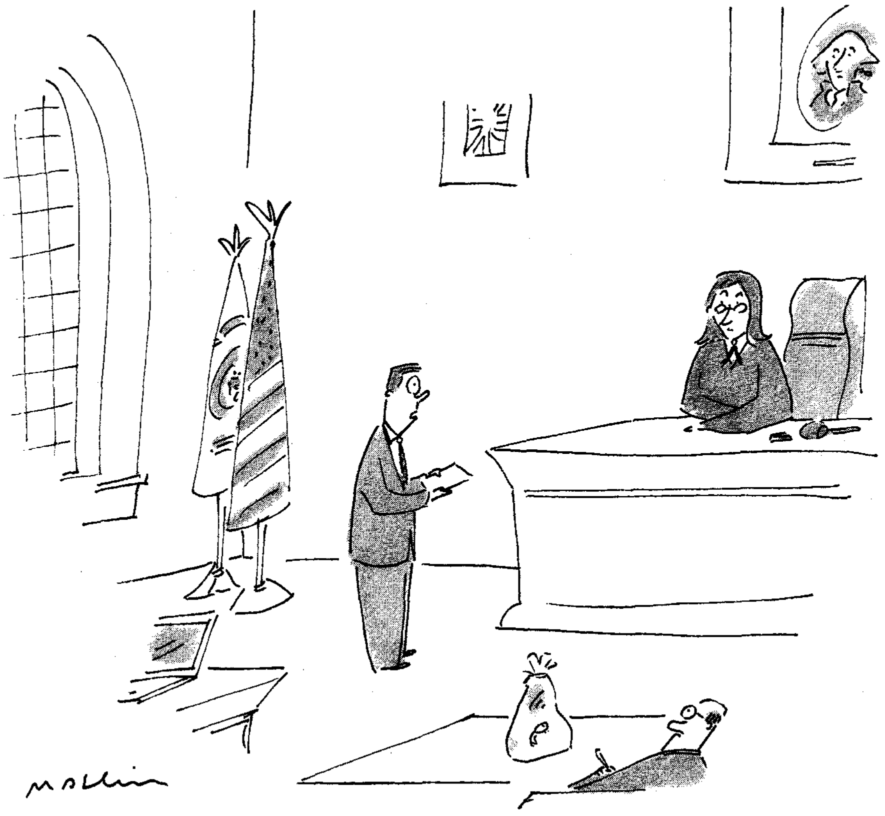

"The state asks that the defendant, although a tadpole, be charged as a frog."

and to everybody in the fancy spa, around the beautiful fire in the evening, the clairvoyant revealed to me that there were two men in my life. And that was right. It was God's truth. I had a husband who was not a very nice man. And I had a lover who, it turned out, was not so absolutely great, either. As it turned out."

Her free hand, the one not holding the drink, began to tremble a little. As much as he wanted to, Matthews did not put out his own hand to steady it.

"So, when I went home, the spa gave me a record of my session with the clairvoyant. A recording—a tape, a CD, I don't know. And would you believe I forgot all about it? I forgot it utterly. Until—"

It was Amy's guessing game. She teased, grinning, tears beginning.

"Until your old man found it," Matthews said.

She pointed her index finger, bingo, at him.

"Until he found it. The prick. Excuse me. Until he found it. Whereupon he divorced me."

"I see."

"And in fact I began to drink. And in fact I later went to . . . the other sort of place you mean." She looked closely at him again. "I might have known you there."

"Yes, you might," he said, "but actually no."

"By then, my friend—" she stopped herself. "Ah, we're talking me, aren't we? Not my made-up friend."

"We're talking first-person."

"After the divorce, I needed a hospital, not a health spa. Get it?"

"Yes," he said. "I understand. I've been there."

"Of course," she said, "you've been there."

"Twice," Matthews said. "For varying lengths of stay."

"You and me," Amy said. "It might even have been the same place."

"That it might."

Amy stood up and leaned on the arm of her leather sofa.

"Drinking makes me want to smoke," she said. He looked up at her; leaning, she had cocked a hip in a kind of Attic stance, lifting the hem of the top she wore, turned away from him, searching for all the cigarettes in the world to smoke at once. Turned away but, as it were, presenting.

He put it all together very quickly, an instinct for the logic of events. The presenting stance, the abasement.

So he stood silently beside her. How easily he might have kissed her and held her. The impulse was there. He drew his hand back and whacked her, as hard as she might reasonably require.

The hit stunned her. She put a hand to her bottom, flushing nicely and trembling very slightly with the sting of it. Then they stood in the moment, on the brink of it. Poised between what? Absurdity and death, eros and thanatos, the screech of lust and Cymbeline? What the boys in the jail called "down-low shit."

But she did not call him vulgar names or question his sanity or turn in anger and astonishment. She said quietly, "I guess I deserved that."

"I guess you did," Matthews told her. His voice was stern and cold, though he took her by the hand. So they went to bed and there was some down-low shit. Had he not been distracted by his pleasure Matthews would have congratulated himself on the soundness of his observations and his quick reaction time.

He was drunk but so inflamed there was no question of his flunking it. He let her guide him to what she liked; experience told him this was best. You let her guide you to what she liked and sometimes what she liked was a drag but often what she liked was delightful, an unsuspected turn, a novelty, warm and silky if not always very clean. So it was with Amy. Absolutely no rougher than she wanted it, he thought. Long-lasting and thorough.

All of that, but in the morning, when he came back from the bathroom, she was quietly crying. He had forced her to drink. Why had he done it? Well. He leaned his arm against the lintel of the bedroom door and rested his forehead on it in a posture like grief. Some remorse. Too bad.

After he had dressed in silence, he stood by her bed. Certainly, he would have liked to reach out. Really, to reach out, to say, "I've been there, Amy, love. See how like you I am?" To lay a hand softly on the shoulder of which he had become fond. But she stayed where she was, and he went and left her alone with the first day of the rest of her life. Easy does it. Walking out to tears. So dispiriting.

He wrote his brief in sobriety the next day and called the deputy master of the jail about his client and Brand.

"The guy's dangerous. I was talking to his shrink."

"Tell me about it," said the deputy master.

He did all the things that duty required, but his first drink came not very late in the day. Happy hour at the Chinese restaurant in the strip mall that observed it early. Not-so-happy hour with the same Scotch he had been drinking. So anyone could see him take the same cup that late last night had killed his love. Atonement, the least he could do.

He did not call her that day or the next. But he did attend a performance of "Cymbeline" at the Community Theatre. "Cymbeline" 's plot seemed ridiculous on every level he could imagine and he found its serious side impenetrable. The point of the production seemed to be the costumes and sets, which were inspired by Celtic art; there had been an exhibition of ancient Celtic artifacts at the college. The actors' gowns were clasped by torques like daggers, the cloth inset with disks that made them shimmer handsomely. The show had gone in for aromatherapy, perfuming the stage to enhance the sort of altered state it was after.

Amy as Imogen looked tired and a little blowzy beneath her makeup. He sat a few rows from the stage so as to be able to see her. He felt ashamed of what had happened, and he had to keep reminding himself that she probably could not see him in the darkness. She did apparently forget her lines at several points, and fell back on mock Shakespeare. It was hard to tell. But when it came time for Imogen to die or pretend to die or whatever fateful thing it was the disguised Imogen did, Amy was very convincing.

The play had a few lines that reached him, impressed him enough to occasion a trip to the library.

> 'Twas but a bolt of nothing, shot at nothing,
> Which the brain makes of fumes: our very
> eyes
> Are like our judgments blind.

How true.

It occurred to him that her flustered reaction to Sister Sophia's prattle about higher powers should have clued him early on. It was the program speaking; the diction of addiction. Himself and Amy and Sister Sophia, all rummies together.

In a better world, he thought, he might have been her friend. They might well have found themselves together, in the place she talked about. On those grim rehab days that passed between hard, clear black lines, they might have had some fun. They might have formed a kind of madhouse friendship. Maybe more than friendship.

And it was not even impossible for him to imagine them, out in the world, soldiering together toward sobriety's sparkling horizon. They would be serving humanity and their higher power. Holding each other upright in Hampton jail, talking about walls of separation and the Rights of Man. The rights of humankind, to be sure. Talking "Cymbeline."

But as Sister Sophia might have put it, he was her lower power. How could it be otherwise? He was the man whose ex-wife had once said of him, "You don't care whether you even get laid, as long as you can make some woman unhappy." In that capacity he had the goodness not to call her.

He did see Amy once again before the winter was over.

It was a small place. She was in a bar, still on the sauce, in the company of a man somewhat older than herself. Naturally, Matthews recognized the boyfriend as a sadistic creep.

She did not seem to hold anything against Matthews. Of course they were both loaded. Amy and the Community Theatre had agreed to forgive each other's limitations. She would be appearing again in the spring. Not Shakespeare this time. Chekhov.

He wished her well. Seeing her again provided him a rush from a pump, a hit from the daily drip of regret and loss. It was time for a drink.

There was a toast for everything. It fell to him, buying the round, to propose it. Here's to a shot at nothing? Here's to love in all its infinite variety? Not life—he was not doing that one.

He touched her glass merrily and said, "Break a leg, Amy." ♦

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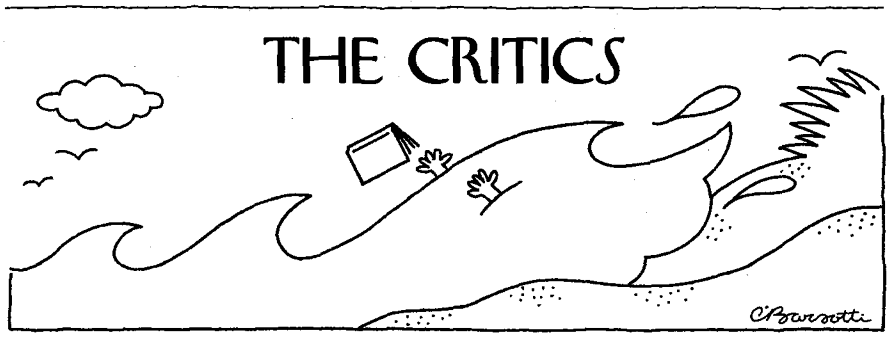


BOOKS

THE STORY OF HIMSELF

The second chapter in J. M. Coetzee's autobiography.

BY JOHN UPDIKE

The autobiographical impulse seizes some novelists, such as Henry James, at the end of their creative labors; they relax at last from the trouble of disguise and manipulation and tell it like it was, as it is remembered, much as the host of a generous feast avails himself of his guests' garnered good will by sleepily rambling on about himself. Others, like Philip Roth in "The Facts," take a mid-career opportunity to establish, amid a crowd of fictions, some baseline data. And an increasing number of writers begin, as did Frank Conroy in "Stop-Time," with autobiography, as if to get themselves out of the way before they settle to business. J. M. Coetzee, the inventive, austere, and penetrating South African novelist and critic, has published, in his early sixties, the second installment of what seems to be an ongoing memoirist project: "Youth: Scenes from Provincial Life II" (Viking; $22.95).

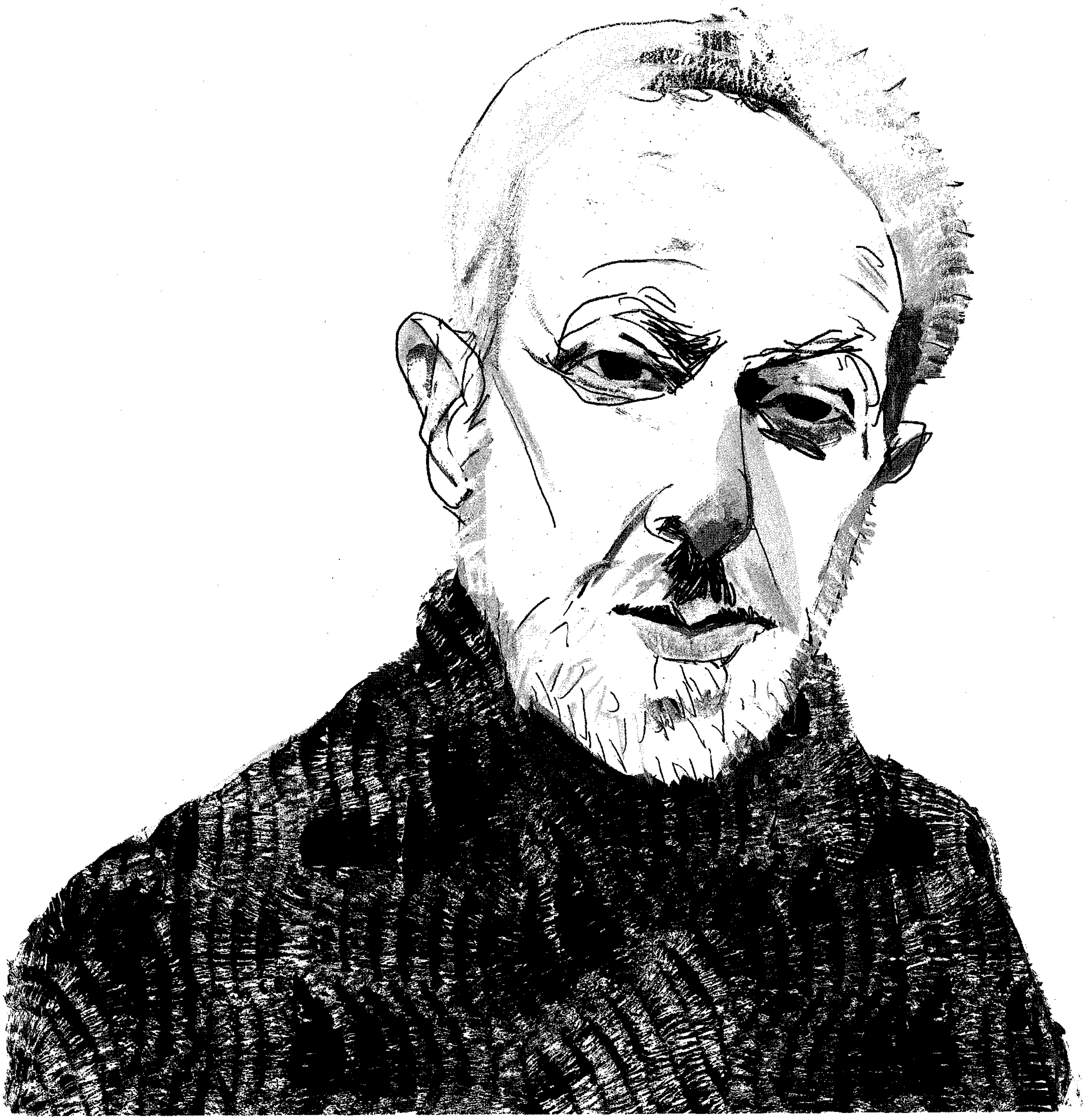
Its predecessor, "Boyhood: Scenes from Provincial Life," appeared five years ago, and perhaps better earned its subtitle: the hero, named John (as in John Michael Coetzee) and rendered in the third person and the present tense, is indeed a provincial boy, living, until a move late in the book, in a bleak, new but dusty housing estate outside the town of Worcester, north of Cape Town. Dates and ages are left vague, but he seems about eight, and in what I took to be third grade, when we meet him, and is thirteen when we leave him, back in Cape Town, where he and his family—father, mother, younger brother—came from. "Scenes," rather than a continuous history, are what we get, as the book's partial publication in magazines like *Granta* and *Artes* suggests. The longest, least glum chapter depicts the family farm, which is run by John's father's brother Son and bears the pretty Afrikaans name Voëlfontein—"Bird-fountain." Excellent and deeply felt as the evocation is, it is something of what we expect from a memoir of a white southern African's childhood, as are Coetzee's accounts of his rather brutal schooling and his intimations of a precarious and unfair racial situation. Less usual is the dour flavor of the child's complex self-awareness. He has a "sense of himself as prince of the house" and dislikes both his parents for it—his father for failing to exert a father's leadership in the household, and his mother for loving him too much, making him fight for independence from her and turning him into "an irascible despot" at home and a physically timid overachiever at school. Coetzee declares, "Nothing he experiences in Worcester, at home or at school, leads him to think that childhood is anything but a time of gritting the teeth and enduring."

As John turns thirteen, he becomes "surly, scowling, dark. He does not like this new, ugly self, he wants to be drawn out of it, but that is something he cannot do by himself." His brilliance at school gives him little pleasure; it just breaks life into a relentless series of tests. (The test, which we pass or fail, is a recurring image in Coetzee.) John imagines no happy future that his cleverness may win for him, though he holds to "the idea of being a great man" and the conviction that "he is different, special." His state of mind, young as he is, is wintry: "His heart is old, it is dark and hard, a heart of stone." Writing tame exercises for English class, he thinks:

> What he would write if he could . . . would be something darker, something that, once it began to flow from his pen, would spread across the page out of control, like spilt ink. Like spilt ink, like shadows racing across the face of still water, like lightning crackling across the sky.

This exactly captures the Gothic quality of an early Coetzee novel like "In the Heart of the Country," but John has years to wait till the writing of books. "Boyhood" ends with him at the funeral of his Aunt Annie, a schoolteacher who once said to him, "So young and yet you know so much. How are you ever going to keep it all in your head?" Aunt Annie had devoted herself to translating and publishing a religious book by her missionary father, a book that winds up as copies, bound and unbound, stacked in a closet. When the boy asks where the books have gone, no one knows: "He alone is left to do the thinking. How will he keep them all in his head, all the books, all the people, all the stories?"

"Youth" picks up John's story six years later, when he is nineteen and living alone in Cape Town, a university student surviving on academic odd jobs, and ends when he is twenty-four, residing in London as a friendless computer programmer and a frustrated poet. The second volume lacks the bucolic bright spots and familial furies of "Boyhood" but has an overriding, suspenseful issue: when and how will our hero find his vocation, evident to us readers if not yet to him, as a world-class novelist? In his account he is almost uniformly listless and miserable: "Misery is his element. He is at home in misery like a fish in water. If misery were to be abolished, he would not know what to do with himself." To the consoling argument that "misery is a school for the soul" and a necessary immersion for the would-be artist he counters, "Misery does not feel like a purifying bath. On the contrary, it feels like a pool of dirty water. From each new bout of misery he emerges not brighter and stronger but duller and flabbier."



In "Youth," the suspenseful issue is when and how Coetzee will find his vocation.

RICCARDO VECCHIO

At the age of twenty, in the wake of the 1960 Sharpeville massacre and the formidable black reaction, as an increasingly repressive white government called for more conscripts in its National Defence Force, he leaves South Africa for London, without completing his university degree. In London, he feels unwelcome, "a graceless colonial . . . and a Boer to boot." He is sex-starved. The beautiful English women he spies on the streets, not to mention the "tall, honey-skinned Swedes" and the "almond-eyed and petite" Italians, seem impossible to meet, let alone impress; the lower-class English women among whom he works, though they have "a cosy sensuality . . . the sensuality of animals brought up together in the same steamy den," are even hard to understand, with their "triphthongs and glottal stops." The few conquests he does make, including a plump seventeen-year-old au pair from Austria, feel like mistakes. His only comfortable liaison is with an old South African girlfriend who arrives in London, sets herself up as a night-club waitress, and with her fast and cheery ways has soon left him behind. Meanwhile, his literary aspirations dwindle to picking through the literary magazines at Foyles and Dillons, wondering whether he should switch from poetry to prose and whether he should imitate Henry James or D. H. Lawrence, and sitting in the Reading Room of the British Museum plowing through the many lesser novels of Ford Madox Ford, toward completion of a master's degree in absentia from the University of Cape Town.

An optical defect, as it were, of autobiographical writing is that the narrator,

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relating the feelings and events that he has endured, appears more passive than he or she could have been; he is modestly blind to the impact he made on others, his own initiatives and aggression. Coetzee portrays himself as a lonely dunce at love, mooning over exotic movie stars like Monica Vitti and Anna Karina, yet by his own desultory count he was a considerable seducer. At the tender age of nineteen, in Cape Town, he acquired a thirty-year-old live-in mistress, an attractive and somewhat disturbed nurse who showed him how sex, for a man, brings with it the whole woman, with her possibly inconvenient troubles, agenda, and ego. He acquired skill at dodging the consequences of involvements: still in Cape Town, he got a girl pregnant and let her cope with all the details of the abortion, and in London he allowed his docile little Austrian, after their last night together, to ease herself out the door in demure silence while he feigned sleep.

Coetzee writes of "London, the city on whose grim cogs he is being broken," while recording impressive survival skills. Jobless, he answers an I.B.M. ad for computer programmers ("He has heard of computer programming but has no clear idea of what it is") and, after taking an I.Q. test ("He has always enjoyed IQ tests, always done well at them"), becomes a trainee and then a programmer. How many aspirants to literary greatness have enough incidental mathematical ability to succeed as computer programmers? True, Coetzee portrays the job as dreary, but he performs creditably; when he quits, after more than a year, to concentrate on becoming a poet, I.B.M. resists his departure. Later, when his work permit needs renewal, he lands another computer job, in the Berkshire offices of International Computers, and rises to the point of installing a program of his devising in the Atlas computer "housed at the Ministry of Defence's atomic weapons research station outside Aldermaston." Though his Cold War sympathies are pro-Russian, he finds himself part of the free-world military effort, and in that uncomfortable position—"a twenty-four-year-old computer programmer in a world in which there are no thirty-year-old computer programmers," a would-be poet "well aware that his failure as a writer and his failure as a lover are so closely parallel that they might as well be the same thing"—his chronicler leaves him.

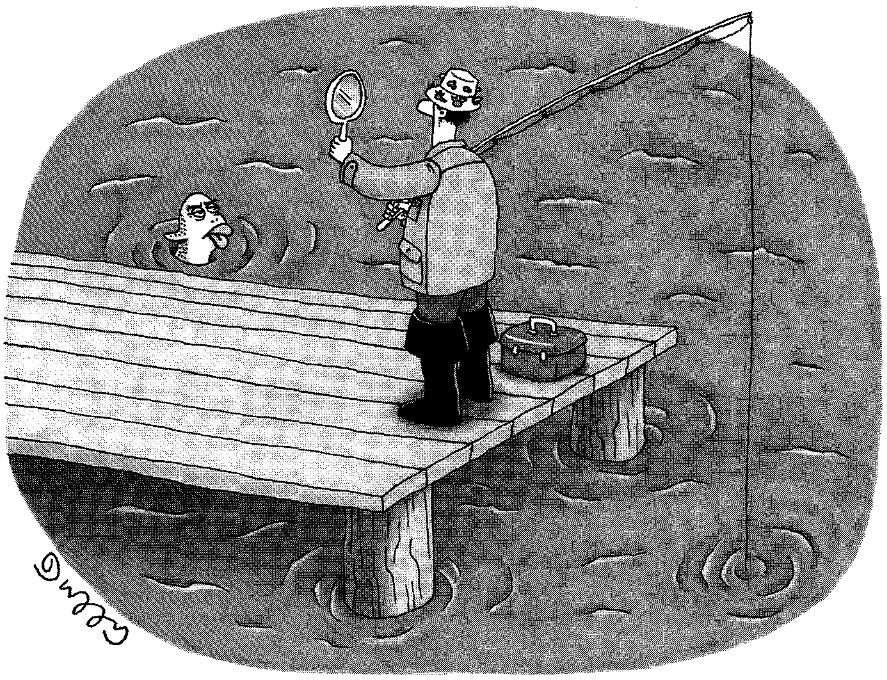
We know from other sources that Coetzee will go on to America, where he will earn a doctorate in linguistics at the University of Texas; the sequel concerning this step promises some relief from the climate of failure and balked ambition that pervades "Youth." (This climate is transferred to the allegorical landscape of his early novel "Waiting for the Barbarians," whose hero, the elderly Magistrate, has a young man's air of being adrift, self-critical and self-indulgent in equal portions; the harrowing tortures that the shadowy Empire inflicts upon him might be construed as cousin to the torments of employment with the imperial International Business Machines.) Toward the memoir's end, there are a few hopeful developments: the hero acquires spectacles for his deteriorating eyesight; he discovers the highly congenial novels of Samuel Beckett; he generates, in recreational computer time, out of words from Pablo Neruda, some "pseudo-poems" that are published in a Cape Town magazine and make a small local sensation. He begins to realize that South Africa, "a wound within him," must be his subject. The eventual triple winner of the CNA Prize, South Africa's premier literary award, and double winner of the Booker Prize is struggling to be born.

In the meantime, these recollections of a stymied, melancholy Afrikaner in London are more entertaining than is easily explained. We like the hero, for all his fecklessness and dogged self-denigration, much as we like the raving heroes of Hamsun's "Hunger" and Dostoyevsky's "Notes from Underground": naked honesty engages us. The brainy, taut prose speeds us along. True, vivifying details are sparse. A young colonial seeking a foothold in London is also the topic of V. S. Naipaul's most recent novel, "Half a Life," and fiction's leeway allows him a satiric animation and a colorful particularity that are rare in "Youth." There is nothing in Coetzee's memoir, for example, like the comic dialogue of the West Indian hero's affair with his Panamanian mentor's coarse but luscious girlfriend, June, who works behind a perfume counter and exudes its aura along with blunt sexual advice, or of the lefter-than-thou snobbery of well-heeled bohemia. Coetzee's project does not permit him to linger at such scenes of metropolitan life; his characters are all incidental to "the story of his life that he tells himself," a concept expressed in "Boyhood" as "the only story he will admit, the story of himself." His setbacks and humiliations merely graze the inner core of self-regard, where, in "depths of coldness, callousness, caddishness," he circles the riddle of becoming an artist: "Does giving rein to his penchants, his vices, and then afterwards gnawing at himself, as he is doing now, help to qualify him as an artist? He cannot, at this moment, see how."

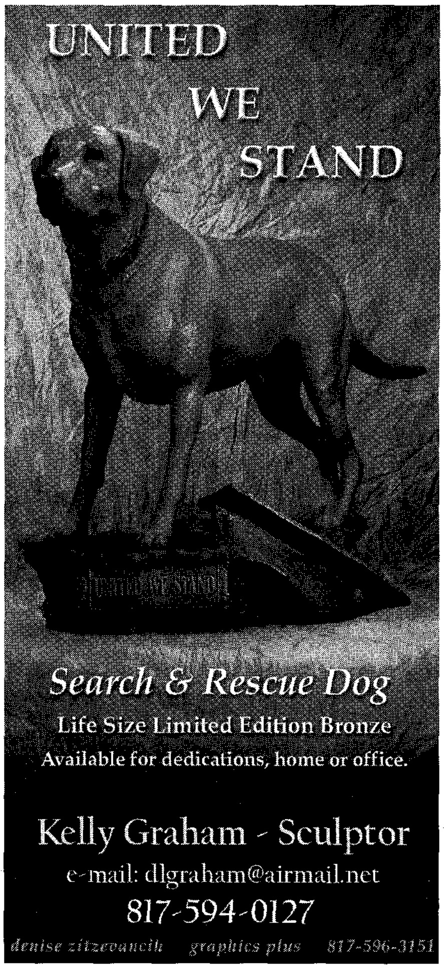
It cannot be easy, decades later, to take an accurate but aloof view of the youth one was. Coetzee's delicate self-mockery threatens to become condescending, and "Youth" 's repeated rhetorical questions verge on burlesque. "Will our solitariness lift, or is the life of the mind its own reward? . . . Does his first venture into prose herald a change of direction in his life? Is he about to renounce poetry? . . . Must he become miserable again in order to write?" Yet the suspense attached to this stalled life is real, at least for any reader who has himself sought to find his or her voice and material amid the crosscurrents of late modernism. Coetzee, with his unusual intelligence and deliberation, confronted problems many a writer, more ebulliently full of himself, rushes past without seeing. His eventual path, via Beckett and the purity of mathematics, was a kind of minimalism, a concision coaxed from what he felt as his innate coldness. "If he were a warmer person he would no doubt find it all easier: life, love, poetry. But warmth is not in his nature," he concludes. While he was still in Cape Town, his taste moved from Hopkins and Keats and Shakespeare to Pope, "the cruel precision of his phrasing," and, even better because wilder, Swift; he feels "fully in accord" with Pound and Eliot's attempt to bring into English "the astringency of the French." In one of his courteous, admirably thorough reviews, Coetzee remarks that Doris Lessing "prunes too lightly" to be a great stylist, and his own paragraphs and plots feel sharply pruned, at times as brutally disciplined as Parisian lime trees. The academic hero of his novel "Disgrace," hearing an African talk orotundly, reflects:

> The language he draws on with such aplomb is, if he only knew it, tired, friable, eaten from the inside as if by termites. Only the monosyllables can still be relied on, and not even all of them.

A delectable tension exists in this writer between a youthful wariness of tired, termite-ridden words and a childish desire to spill ink, out of control, to unload what is in his head. Even the low-energy years described in "Youth" take on, in the clipped telling, a curious electricity; the astringent pages leave us keen to read on. ◆



"Nobody likes a showoff."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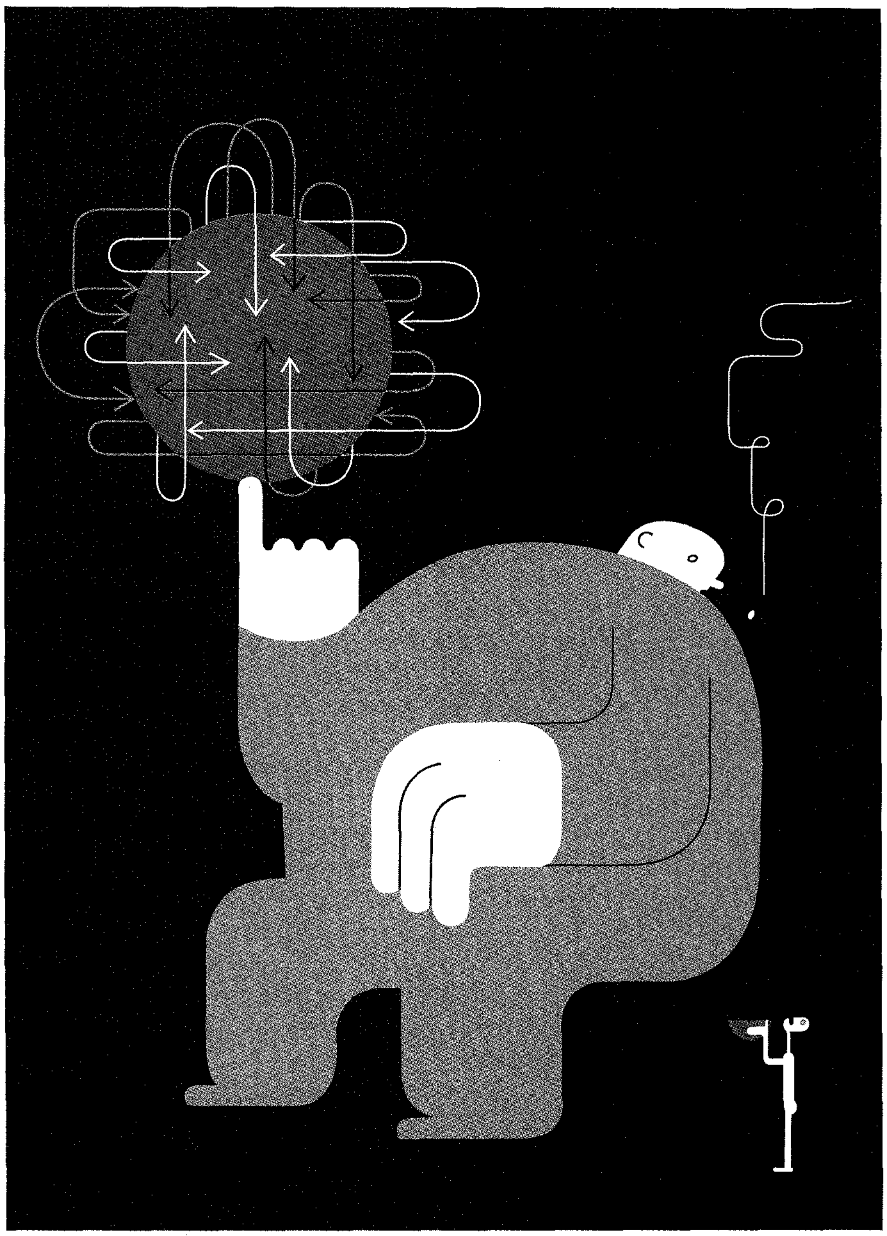
MASTER OF DISASTER

A leading economist says the protesters have a point about the I.M.F.

BY JOHN CASSIDY

In 1998, Joseph Stiglitz, a Columbia professor who shared last year's Nobel Prize in Economics, visited a village in rural Morocco where aid workers had been encouraging local women to raise chickens. At the time, Stiglitz was the chief economist of the World Bank, the Washington-based lending agency, which was supporting the project. It had started out well. The Moroccan government supplied the villagers with as many newly hatched chicks as they needed. But at some point, Stiglitz says, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank's sister organization, told the Moroccan government to leave the task of distributing chicks to private enterprise. A for-profit firm agreed to supply the villagers, but it refused to guarantee the chicks' survival—a policy that had calamitous consequences. The impoverished peasants refused to risk what little money they had on livestock that were likely to die in large numbers in infancy, and the nascent industry withered. When Stiglitz arrived in Morocco, the chicken coops were empty. A promising attempt to alleviate poverty had failed.



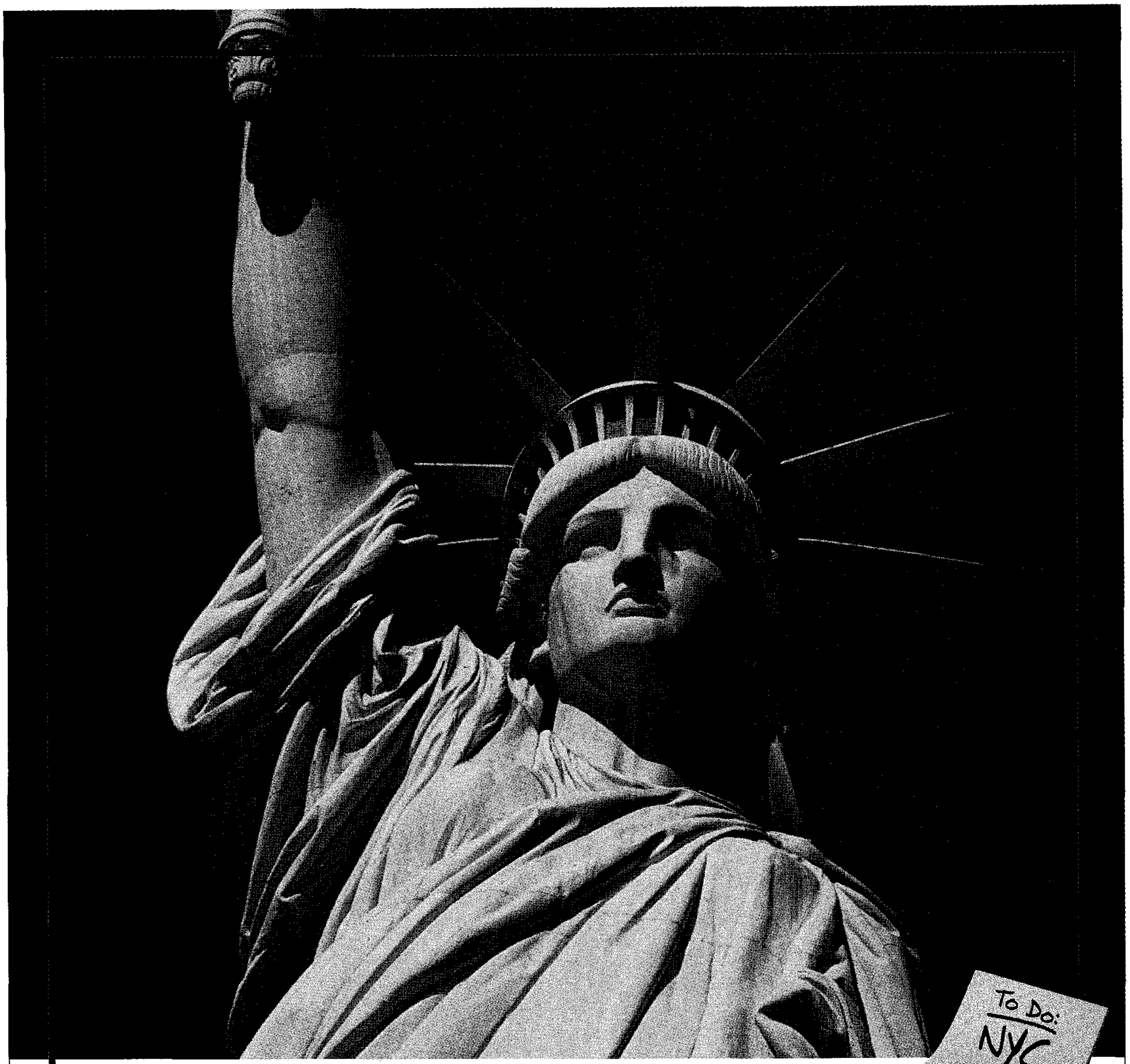
According to Joseph Stiglitz, globalization has been hijacked by the rich.

RICHARD MC GUIRE

It may seem like a long way from Moroccan chickens to the economic crisis in Argentina, the recent financial upheavals in Southeast Asia, the failures of post-Soviet capitalism, and anti-globalization protests on the streets of Seattle and Genoa, but in "Globalization and Its Discontents" (Norton; $24.95) Stiglitz argues that all these matters are related. In promoting private enterprise wherever it can, the I.M.F. was following the so-called Washington Consensus view of economic development, which sees the expansion of free-market capitalism as the route to prosperity. With the backing of the United States Department of the Treasury, the I.M.F. urges governments everywhere to privatize, liberalize, and retrench. In the past twenty-five years, many developing countries have followed this advice, dismantling their public-sector enterprises and opening up their economies to international trade and investment. As a result, the world has become more interconnected than ever, with the level of exports, imports, and cross-border investment all increasing sharply.

According to classic economic theory, this expansion of trade and commerce should have made humanity a lot better off. Ever since Adam Smith, economists have generally agreed that trade is a good thing, because it allows countries to specialize in what they do best. This "division of labor" (Smith's phrase) raises productivity, which results in more income to spend on food, health, education, and consumer goods. Although some people lose their jobs as the pattern of trade changes, the winners gain enough to compensate the losers and still have some left over for themselves.

During the nineteen-seventies and eighties, when countries like South Korea and Singapore were exporting their way out of poverty, the theory seemed to be working as advertised. Globalization, in Stiglitz's words, "helped hun-



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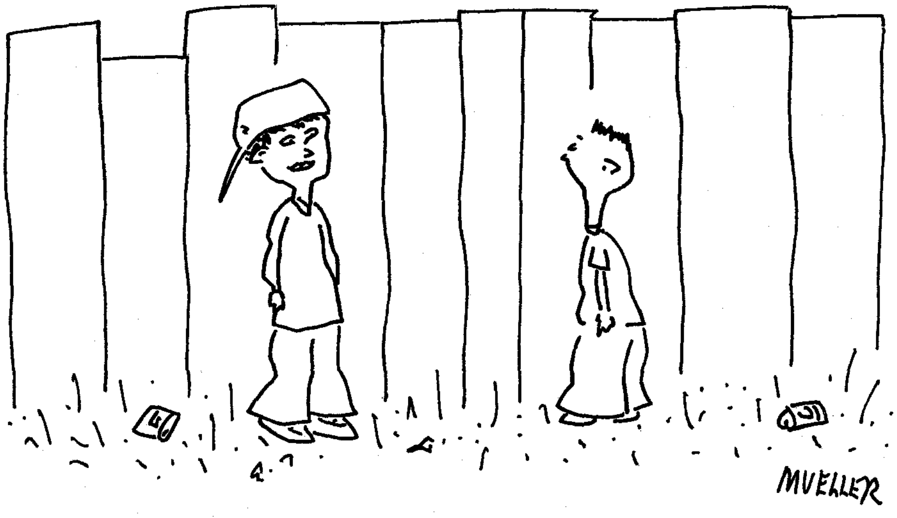


"Let's find something and keep it from blowing up."

• •

dreds of millions of people attain higher standards of living, beyond what they, or most economists, thought imaginable." During the past decade, however, something has gone wrong. Since 1990, the number of people living on less than two dollars a day has risen by more than a hundred million, to three billion. The gap between rich and poor countries has turned into a chasm. Even relatively prosperous parts of the developing world, such as Southeast Asia and Eastern Europe, have fallen into unprecedented slumps. "Globalization today is not working for many of the world's poor," Stiglitz declares. "It is not working for much of the environment. It is not working for the stability of the global economy."

Why not? According to Stiglitz, the rich countries have hijacked globalization, using as weapons the I.M.F., the World Trade Organization, and other international bodies that are supposed to act in the interests of all countries. These institutions are "all too often closely aligned with the commercial and financial interests of those in the advanced industrial countries," Stiglitz writes, and the net effect of the policies they promote is "to benefit the few at the expense of the many, the well-off at the expense of the poor." The governments of the rich countries have pushed developing nations to open their borders to computers and banking services but continued to protect their own farmers and textile workers from the cheap food and clothes that poor countries produce. They have supported the extension of patent agreements that guarantee high profits for Western pharmaceutical companies like Pfizer and Merck while depriving African governments of the drugs they need to fight an AIDS epidemic. "The critics of globalization accuse Western countries of hypocrisy," Stiglitz writes, "and the critics are right."

If this argument brings to mind the young protesters who have made a business of disrupting international summits, Stiglitz is unapologetic. Until the anti-globalization movement came along, "there was little hope for change and no outlets for complaint," he writes. "*Some* of the protestors went to excesses; *some* of the protestors were arguing for higher protectionist barriers against the developing countries, which would have made their plight even worse. But despite these problems, it is the trade unionists, students, environmentalists—ordinary citizens—marching in the streets of Prague, Seattle, Washington, and Genoa who have put the need for reform on the agenda of the developed world."

As this passage suggests, Stiglitz is part of a growing heterodoxy that seeks to define a middle ground between the Washington Consensus and the more radical elements of the anti-globalization movement. The financier and philanthropist George Soros is part of the dissenting movement, too, and he has written a pithy little book, "On Globalization" (Public Affairs; $20), setting out his views and his recommendations for reform. Like Stiglitz, Soros supports globalization in principle but is dismayed at the narrow focus among policymakers on expanding trade and industry. "International trade and global financial markets are very good at generating wealth, but they cannot take care of other social needs, such as the preservation of peace, alleviation of poverty, protection of the environment, labor conditions, or human rights," he maintains.

Soros's book is clearly written, but it doesn't carry as much weight as Stiglitz's. As a leading economic theorist and someone who has served in senior government positions, Stiglitz has a perspective on his subject which can hardly be ignored. Within four years of obtaining his Ph.D., from M.I.T., in 1967, he had published more than fifteen academic papers, several of which are now regarded as seminal. He has since established himself as an expert in many areas of economics, including finance, development, and the public sector.

The common theme running through Stiglitz's academic work is that markets often don't work in the simplistic way that is taught in Econ. 101. Because of complications like asymmetries of information between buyers and sellers, markets sometimes fail to work at all, and the government has to step in. (It was Stiglitz's work on asymmetric information that won him a Nobel Prize.) In 1993, when Stiglitz joined the White House Council of Economic Advisers, at the start of the Clinton Administration, he naïvely thought he saw the chance to "forge an economic policy and philosophy that viewed the relationship between government and markets as complementary." Instead, he found that "decisions were often made because of ideology and politics. As a result many wrong-headed actions were taken."

Stiglitz stayed at the council for four years, eventually becoming its chairman. In 1997, he moved a few hundred yards along Pennsylvania Avenue to the World Bank. The World Bank and the I.M.F. had been founded at the end of the Second World War to promote expansionary Keynesian policies around the globe, with the bank focussing on long-term development and the fund on short-term crisis management, but they long ago converted to the tenets of what Stiglitz calls free-market fundamentalism. The I.M.F., in particular, seems to revel in its role as enforcer of the Washington Consensus. Since countries approach the I.M.F. only when they are desperate for money, the fund has a good deal of leverage, which it uses to force governments to cut budget deficits, raise taxes, and close down or sell off state enterprises. Though these reforms are sometimes necessary, Stiglitz maintains that the I.M.F.'s representatives are often oblivious of the human suffering they cause. "Modern high-tech warfare is designed to remove physical contact: dropping bombs from 50,000 feet ensures that one does not 'feel' what one does," he writes. "Modern economic management is similar: from one's luxury hotel, one can callously impose policies about which one would think twice if one knew the people whose lives one was destroying."

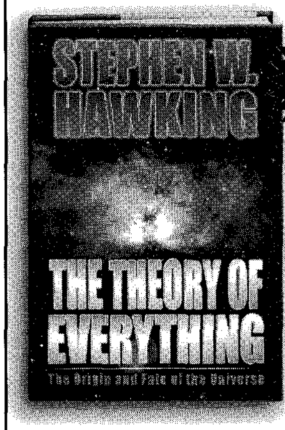
The centerpiece of "Globalization and Its Discontents" is a critical account of the I.M.F.'s role in the Asian financial crisis and the Russian transition. The Asian crisis began in July, 1997, when Thailand devalued its currency, and it quickly spread throughout Southeast Asia, plunging the region into the deepest recession it had seen for decades. Stiglitz argues that the underlying cause of the collapse was the misguided financial liberalization that Washington had urged upon the Asian countries during the previous few years.

Countries like Singapore and South Korea hardly needed economic advice from anybody. Through a combination of hard work, high savings rates, and extensive government intervention, they had turned themselves into universally admired models for development. Between 1950 and 1990, South Korea raised its gross domestic product per capita from ninety dollars to forty-four hundred dollars. As part of the "Asian model" of development, governments prevented foreign investors (and domestic residents) from moving money in and out of their countries freely. These restrictions helped prevent damaging swings in exchange rates; they also kept out American financial firms, which were eager to expand in Asia. Beginning in the early nineteen-nineties, the I.M.F. and the Treasury Department encouraged the Asians to remove the restriction on capital movements. Stiglitz viewed this policy as an unnecessary sop to Wall Street, but the Treasury Department overruled his objections. By the middle of the nineteen-nineties, South Korea, Thailand, and most other Asian countries had heeded Washington's advice and abolished controls on money flows. The result was a speculative boom, with foreign capital pouring into risky investments. For a while, the region seemed to be growing even faster than usual. But, once the Thai crisis erupted, overseas investors pulled out their money en masse, causing financial markets to collapse.

The I.M.F. made the downturn worse by ordering the stricken countries to raise interest rates and balance their budgets in order to restore the confidence of investors. These austerity policies had been designed for profligate countries in Latin America, which ran big budget deficits and printed too much money. Most of the Asian countries, by contrast, had balanced budgets, or even surpluses, when the crisis struck. The fact that monetary policy was being tightened during a recession only spooked investors more, and the conflagration spread to other countries, including Malaysia and Indonesia. Suharto's government was forced to cut food and fuel subsidies in order to meet the I.M.F.'s fiscal targets, and the subsequent riots ended up bringing down the dictator. Mahathir bin Mohamad, the Malaysian Prime Minister, managed to escape Suharto's fate only by ignoring the I.M.F.'s advice. In the face of bitter opposition from Washington, he introduced laws that made it difficult for Malaysians and foreign investors to send their money abroad. Far from destroying the Malaysian economy, as some free-market economists had predicted, these "capital controls" allowed the country to recover more quickly than most of its neighbors.

The Asian financial crisis never came any closer to most Americans than the business pages. Yet it was so severe that some people in the region concluded that the I.M.F. and the American government had set out deliberately to weaken a potential economic rival. Stiglitz doesn't go that far, but his judgment is almost as damning: "The I.M.F. was not partic-

KNOW IT ALL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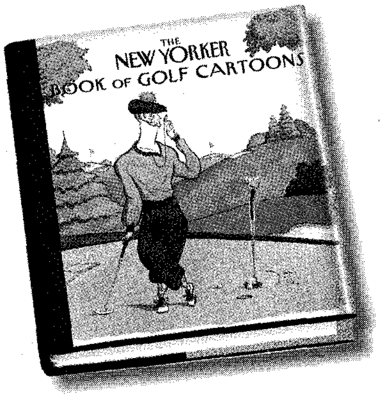

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ipating in a conspiracy, but it was reflecting the interests and ideology of the Western financial community."

Stiglitz's analysis of what happened in Russia will be more controversial. As he details, the I.M.F. advanced the country billions of dollars in loans to support the "shock therapy" that Boris Yeltsin's government administered after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The therapy involved freeing prices, hawking state-owned enterprises to private investors at a discount, and trying to maintain a strong currency. Stiglitz argues that these policies were misguided, and he marshals some depressing statistics to support his case. Between 1940 and 1946, a period when Hitler's Army laid waste to Russia, total industrial production in the Soviet Union fell by about a quarter. Between 1990 and 1999, Russian industrial production fell by more than half. Though the economy has recovered somewhat in the past couple of years, the Russian gross domestic product is still well below where it was when the Berlin Wall came down. Poverty rates are much higher, life expectancy has fallen (almost unprecedented in a developed country), and much of Russia's industry is in the hands of former Communists and gangsters. For Stiglitz, the Russians' attempt to build capitalism virtually overnight was reminiscent of the Bolsheviks' failed attempt to impose Socialism after November, 1917. Just as chaos forced Lenin to retreat to the halfway station of the "New Economic Policy," the dramatic collapse of the post-Soviet economy forced the modern-day reformers to back off. In 1998, the ruble collapsed (despite another I.M.F. loan) and the Yeltsinites were eventually replaced by a former K.G.B. agent, Vladimir Putin.

Is Stiglitz overstating the case against the I.M.F. here? The proponents of shock therapy, such as the Harvard economist Andrei Shleifer, who advised the Russian government during the mid-nineteen-nineties, argued that moving rapidly was the only way to prevent a Communist resurgence, and that the policy wasn't enforced vigorously enough. Instead of consistently promoting radical change, Yeltsin vacillated, one moment supporting reformers like Anatoly Chubais, the next moment backing conservatives like Viktor Chernomyrdin. Whatever the merits of such political considerations, though, the strictly economic case for the shock therapy is underwhelming. Indeed, there is now a consensus among economists that it is a mistake to try to create a market economy without first developing the institutions necessary for capitalism to function properly, such as enforceable laws and a working tax system. Under Putin, the Russian government is now concentrating on building just that sort of infrastructure, and the results are encouraging. Even the I.M.F. has come to acknowledge the wisdom of this strategy; almost everyone agrees that there is no shortcut to building a modern economy.

Stiglitz commends the gradual approach that China and Poland have taken toward liberalizing their economies. In Poland, one of the best-performing economies in Eastern Europe in recent years, the government rejected a key element of the Washington Consensus: rapid privatization. Instead of rushing to sell off state enterprises, the Poles concentrated on creating a modern legal system and a social safety net. Only then did they allow private investors to take over banks and the like. In China, too, the government left most of the big state-owned firms in place, but it created new firms alongside them by allowing villages and towns to set up their own enterprises, often in partnership with foreign companies. During the nineteen-nineties, China's G.D.P. grew at an average annual rate of about ten per cent, and its poverty rate dropped dramatically. "The contrast between what happened in China and what has happened in countries like Russia, which bowed to I.M.F. ideology, could not be starker," Stiglitz writes. "In case after case, it seemed that China, a newcomer to market economies, was more sensitive to the incentive effects of its policy decisions than the I.M.F. was to its."

"Globalization and Its Discontents" does have some disappointing omissions, especially concerning the author's own experiences. In the Clinton Administration, Stiglitz clashed frequently with Lawrence Summers, the Harvard economist who served in the Treasury Department and eventually became the Secretary of the Treasury. Summers was far more sympathetic to the Washington Consensus than Stiglitz was, and he worked closely with the I.M.F. According to some people in Washington, Summers forced Stiglitz out of the World Bank by demanding his departure as the price of supporting the reappointment of James Wolfensohn as the institution's president. Yet, apart from a few derogatory references to Summers's role in specific policy debates, Stiglitz makes no mention of their rivalry, or of the circumstances surrounding his resignation from the World Bank.

All of this raises the inevitable question of how much of the book is score-settling. It will not escape I.M.F. officials that Stiglitz is overly reluctant to criticize the governments of developing countries for making bad policies, which have done at least as much as the I.M.F. to keep poor people poor. And he surely understates the difficulties facing the I.M.F. when it goes into a country where the stock market and the currency are both plummeting. What's more, I.M.F.-led bailouts can sometimes work, as they did in Mexico.

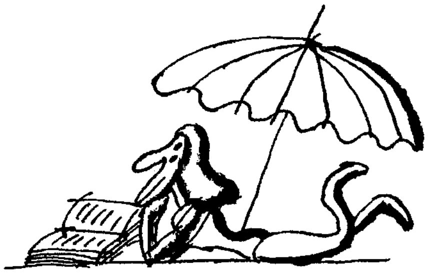
Still, there is no disputing Stiglitz and Soros's central point that global capitalism has outgrown its institutional framework. Both authors suggest reforms that might go some way toward remedying this situation. First and foremost, they advocate restructuring the international institutions, so that they are more democratic and effective. The I.M.F.'s voting structure dates back decades and makes no sense—the Netherlands has about as many votes as China has. Stiglitz also recommends improving banking supervision, changing the international bankruptcy laws, reducing the number of I.M.F. bailouts, and increasing the amount of aid and debt relief that developing countries receive, especially those in Africa. Soros, for his part, thinks international aid should be increased and that the World Trade Organization ought to take more account of issues like workers' rights, health and safety, and the environment.

One can debate the particulars of reform but not the need for it. "Without reform, the backlash that has already started will mount and discontent with globalization will grow," Stiglitz writes. "This will be a tragedy for all of us, and especially for the billions who might otherwise have benefited." ♦

BRIEFLY NOTED

Eye of the Albatross, *by Carl Safina (Holt; $27.50).* The heroine of this powerful tale of marine life in the Pacific is Amelia, a Laysan albatross who was tagged with a satellite transmitter so that biologists could track her movements. Safina, author of the memorable "Song for the Blue Ocean," offers up a remarkable portrait of Amelia as she glides thousands of miles, journeying from tropical waters to sub-Arctic seas, spending almost all of her life in the air. And he describes with equal vividness the ocean across which she travels: fusing ecological history and serious science to great effect, he shows how the delicate interplay between human intervention and natural adaptation affects the lives of seals, sharks, turtles, and seabirds. Although the author is never less than outraged at the damage that humans can cause, his critique is nuanced, and he shows how, in some respects, the ocean is healthier today than it was a century ago. The book goes astray only when he devotes time to the personal lives of his fellow-scientists, whose obsession with albatrosses is far less interesting than the albatrosses themselves.

The Lovely Bones, *by Alice Sebold (Little, Brown; $21.95).* Sebold takes an enormous risk in her wonderfully strange début novel: her narrator, Susie Salmon, is dead—murdered at the age of fourteen by a disturbed neighbor—and speaks from the vantage of Heaven. Such is the author's skill that from the first page this premise seems utterly believable. Susie's voice has all the inflections of a smart teen-ager's, by turns inquisitive, sarcastic, and wistful; unplacated by Heaven, she watches as her family falls apart and her friends resume their lives without her. Sebold slips easily from the ordinary pleasures of a suburban childhood (cutting class; the first kiss) to moments of eerie beauty (a cloud of souls, "all of them clamoring at once inside the air"). If in the end she reaches too far, the book remains a stunning achievement.



Moral Hazard, *by Kate Jennings (Fourth Estate; $21.95).* Jennings's title is the term used on Wall Street to describe dubious transactions (often high-risk ones that rely upon government bailouts), and in her spare, unsettling novel the human transactions are far more harrowing than the financial ones. The narrator is Cath, a woman in her forties, whose husband, Bailey, has been given a diagnosis of Alzheimer's. Desperate for money, Cath takes a job that she hates—speechwriter for a second-rank investment bank, a place "where women were about as welcome as fleas in a sleeping bag." Her loathing of the corporate world is accompanied by her increasing horror at the mental disintegration of her husband; she is disgusted by the greed that surrounds her, but her unsentimental chronicle of the progress of a disease is what makes this fine, short novel almost unbearably sad.

On a Wave, *by Thad Ziolkowski (Atlantic Monthly; $23).* At the age of nine, the author was taken off to Florida, after his parents' divorce, by his mother and a scary new stepfather-to-be. It was 1970, and there was a lot to escape on land. He found refuge in the ocean, teaching himself to surf. Humiliation and injury were the main elements of his initiation into the local cult and difficult art of wave-riding, but this story of a sensitive boy's saltwater education is laconic and assured; the author compares watching a gangly pro on a tiny board tear apart waves to "watching a barbarian torch a village from atop a dwarf pony." The surfing competence that Ziolkowski achieved was considerable, but this memoir is more than an account of a sport mastered. It's a sharp, self-conscious portrait of the artist as a young grommet.

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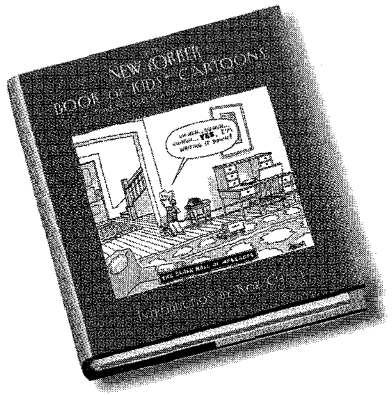

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THE ART WORLD

TOUGH LOVE

Resurrecting Joan Mitchell.

BY PETER SCHJELDAHL

At a boozy dinner party that I attended in a New York walkup nearly thirty years ago, a woman announced that she was getting married. Joan Mitchell, who was there, exploded. How could anyone even think of doing something so bourgeois? The buzzer sounded. It was Mitchell's longtime lover, the French-Canadian painter Jean-Paul Riopelle. He wanted to speak to her, but he wouldn't come upstairs. From the landing, she told him in scorching terms to leave her alone. Back at the table, she resumed denouncing the insidiousness of marriage as a trap for free souls. The buzzer again. Another cascade of profanity down the stairwell. I was awed. Here was craziness of a scary and rare order. Those who knew Joan Mitchell pass these kinds of stories around like sacred-monster trading cards. But Mitchell's personality was one thing, and her art is entirely another. They share only the energy of a towering original who, ten years after her death, in France, where she lived near Monet's gardens at Giverny, has yet to receive her due.

"The Paintings of Joan Mitchell," at the Whitney, should remedy that. This dense, dazzling retrospective of works spanning her career, from 1951 to 1992, confirms that Mitchell was not just the best of the so-called second-generation Abstract Expressionists—a status already hers by common consent—but a great modern artist who started strong and improved with age. Her work at the Whitney makes it hard to imagine why anyone would want to paint other than abstractly, revelling in the liberty and purity of oils wielded with articulate passion. Mitchell seems to me the best argument for redressing the long-standing bias against contemporary expressionist painting that was mandated by Clement Greenberg in his promotion of mannerly colorfield abstraction. (According to Mitchell, she was "kicked out" of a gallery owned by Lawrence Rubin after Greenberg told the dealer, "Get rid of that gestural horror.")

Mitchell was born in 1926 to a wealthy family in Chicago. She was lavishly educated in literature and art by her mother, Marion Strobel, the co-editor, with Harriet Monroe, of the leading American magazine of modern verse, *Poetry*, and at a private school that she later described as "progressive, not conventional, full of Jews." (I quote from the introduction to the Whitney catalogue, by the show's curator, Jane Livingston.) Her maternal grandfather, a bridge engineer, imparted a love of structural design. Her father, a dermatologist and an amateur artist, pushed her to excel in all things. As a teenager, she became a championship figure skater, as well as a diver and a tennis player. She said that she chose a painting career to escape her father's control. (In psychoanalysis for much of her life, she surely plumbed that subject.) She was a natural—witness the chromatic inventiveness of several landscape gouaches that she painted in art school.

In 1949, she married her former schoolmate Barney Rosset, whose eventful ownership of Grove Press began in 1951. Their intense union ended in divorce a year later. In New York, she made a point of befriending Willem de Kooning, Philip Guston, and Franz Kline. Another ally was the poet Frank O'Hara. She held her own in the hard-living downtown scene. This wasn't easy for a woman painter who—unlike Helen Frankenthaler, Lee Krasner, and Elaine de Kooning—was not the mate of an alpha male. She kept an apartment on St. Marks Place but lived mainly in France, where her work was always well regarded. Indeed, she might be seen as the last great foreign-born French painter, invigorating Parisian painterly sensuousness with American nerviness and New York School rigor.

One stayed alert around Mitchell. I recall her raffish and severe presence: a long, handsome face framed by huge eyeglasses and a straight mop of dark hair, wreathed in cigarette smoke. A wry set to her mouth would portend the utterance of something startlingly smart and, as often as not, scathing. But when she painted she sang, almost despite herself. Several works from the sixties, which she termed "very violent and angry paintings," are among the most subtly lyrical of her career. In the catalogue of a companion Mitchell show at the Edward Tyler Nahem gallery, the curator and critic Richard Francis aptly quotes Andrew Marvell: "Annihilating all that's made / To a green thought in a green shade."

The earliest work at the Whitney is the precocious, ten-foot-long "Cross Section of a Bridge" (1951), whose wittily bashed-up Cubism recalls both Marcel Duchamp's "Nude Descending a Staircase" and works by de Kooning from the late nineteen-forties. In the next painting, from the same year, that style melts like tallow, signalling the influence of Mitchell's most significant forebear, Arshile Gorky. Unlike peers who aped the styles of de Kooning or Pollock, Mitchell absorbed Gorky's earlier modulation of Picasso and Surrealism into a formal language of counterposed line and color and thick and thin textures. Gorky understood that emotional eloquence is an effect not of theatrical gestures but of varied contrasts and rhythms, in which surprising disjunctions join in a harmonious whole. For Gorky's insinuating linear figures, Mitchell substituted the shapes of strokes made with brushes of different sizes. At times, every mark seems to have its own personality.

"L'Arbre de Phyllis" (1991): Virtuoso orchestrations of color, texture, and rhythm.

COURTESY WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

The success of the drips and runs in Mitchell's pictures, which she painted on upright canvases, suggests preternatural luck. There isn't a wrong note in her cadenzas—only a swarm of piquant, fugitive grace notes falling like loose change. Every element has a rising, hovering, or sagging weight, achieved by her finesse with relative densities and by a supreme sense of color. ("She could make yellow heavy," Brice Marden has remarked.) A resistance to repeating herself produced no signature motif but an impression of musical variations on a silent theme.

Like Monet, Mitchell used colors redolent of nature and juxtaposed them to mingle in the eye, though not to create illusions of atmospheric light. Like the greatest Monets—the Rouen Cathedrals and some of the Giverny near-abstractions—her best paintings amount to metaphysical conundrums: you don't know what you're looking at. It's paint, of course, but as a medium of contradictory connotations. One thickly worked triptych, "Wet Orange" (1971-72), struck me, to my happy bewilderment, as both all wall and all window. Mitchell also had something of Monet's spookily disinterested professionalism. Straight from the shoulder, she employed her talent and troubled fury as if they were nothing but tools.

In the Whitney catalogue, the art historian Linda Nochlin quotes Elaine de Kooning: "I was talking to Joan Mitchell at a party ten years ago when a man came up to us and said, 'What do you women artists think . . .' Joan grabbed my arm and said, 'Elaine, let's get the hell out of here.' " The mission of Mitchell's animus was to get her out of situations that threatened her freedom. The situations generally involved fatherly importunity or condescension. The personal wasn't political—she was leery of all solidarities, including the feminist one—but, rather, a daily battle that had desperately high stakes. Her orneriness was the palace guard of her lyricism. ♦

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

CRIME-FAMILY MAN

"Road to Perdition" and "Read My Lips."

BY DAVID DENBY

"Road to Perdition," starring Tom Hanks as a Depression-era hit man, is a solemnly beautiful art concept—perhaps the most thoroughly stylized gangster picture since the Coen brothers' "Miller's Crossing," from 1990. In that tale of baroque complication, the Coens included such oddball visual motifs as a fedora flying through the autumn woods. "Road to Perdition," which is directed by the talented Englishman Sam Mendes ("American Beauty"), is not as eccentric as "Crossing," but fedoras do matter in it, as do long dark coats, and the thick weave and bulk of men's suits from 1931. Rain matters, too, buckets of it—I haven't seen rain come down quite this strenuously since the noir movies of the forties and fifties. Precipitation of such intensity is not really a form of weather; it's closer to a spiritual condition, a portent of sin and violence in a fallen world. Mendes, along with his collaborators, the cinematographer Conrad L. Hall and the veteran costume designer Albert Wolsky, drew visual ideas and moods from old movies and comic books, distilling the memory of crime fiction—not the memory of crime—into imagery that couldn't possibly be more iconic: the flat farmland and grim industrial cities of the Midwest; the black Fords and Buicks, their rectangular tops gleaming in the wet as they steam along country roads; the long-coated thugs, faces in shadow, inexorably going about their business in warehouses, in hotel rooms, in brothels, in the street. Hall's palette is muted and precise, the action sudden, swift, and bloody. Visually, the movie is all of a piece, and consistently impressive, and I enjoyed some of it very much. But, judged by the standards of the original "Scarface" or "Bonnie and Clyde" or "The Godfather," or even "Bugsy," this is a stilted, self-conscious piece of work—a case of dark-toned academic classicism. There isn't a joke or a touch of wit anywhere in the movie.

As Michael Sullivan (Hanks) gets ready for dinner at home with his family—he unbuttons his jacket and removes his gun—his awed twelve-year-old son, Michael, Jr. (Tyler Hoechlin), watches from the hallway. Throughout the movie, Mendes tries to sustain the boy's baffled view of his father, a stolid figure with a small mustache and a stiff walk. Who can understand this unsmiling, mysterious man who kills routinely? As an orphaned child, Sullivan was saved from the streets by John Rooney (Paul Newman), the hearty, vicious crime boss of the small Illinois city they all live in. Half soldier, half indentured servant, Michael goes on murderous errands whose purpose he never questions. He knows he's heading straight for Hell, but he must obey—Rooney has given him a life. When Michael, Jr., hides in the car one night and sees his father and Rooney's unstable son, Connor (Daniel Craig), kill someone, the boy discovers a secret that puts the whole Sullivan family in jeopardy. Connor is a vengeful man: they must run from him or kill him. The movie turns into a prolonged ordeal of pursuit and flight, a dark, relentless ritual of betrayal. Sullivan, after his wife and younger son are murdered, takes to the road with Michael, Jr., and seeks the protection of the Capone crime family, all of whom, including Al Capone's right-hand man, Frank Nitti (Stanley Tucci), seem to hang out in the same swank hotel in Chicago. We get the point: the Rooneys and Capone's men are gangsters, but Sullivan has

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become a true outlaw. For all his sober demeanor and family instincts, he's an ungovernable killer with superb survival instincts and the independent spirit of a masterless samurai. The young boy who loves him wonders: Is he a good man or not?

"Road to Perdition" is based on a 1998 black-and-white graphic novel by Max Allan Collins and Richard Piers Rayner (who did the art), and maybe the bluff crudity of the original conception accounts for what's so peculiar and stunted in the movie. There's no civilian population to speak of (at least, they never intrude on the action), and the police never investigate any of the gangland murders (Sullivan alone kills about a dozen people). Michael, Jr., drives all over Illinois in his father's Ford, and no one stops him, or even notices. Where are we? Not in the actual world but in a paradise of pure criminality, a dreamland whose only reality is moral and aesthetic. The screenwriter, David Self, has thrown in a wild card—a ghoul named Maguire (Jude Law), who works for newspapers, photographing corpses, and also, on the side, as a hired killer (sometimes he kills a man and then takes his picture). With his hair thinned, his teeth rotted, and his ears sticking out under a bowler, the extraordinarily handsome Jude Law has been turned into a ferrety grotesque comparable in hideousness to Max Schreck in F. W. Murnau's "Nosferatu." Maguire is a fascinating creep, but I'm not sure what the point of this bloodsucker is. Are the filmmakers questioning their own photographic interest in murder? If so, the idea isn't dramatized. Maguire becomes Sullivan's nemesis, implacable, omniscient—the embodiment of death itself, which is just another aestheticized concept.

Tom Hanks plays a gangster in Sam Mendes's "Road to Perdition."

ROBERT RISKO

At its heart, "Road to Perdition" is a movie about two father-son relationships, but neither is quite worked out. John and Connor Rooney are seen alone only once. Paul Newman's anguish—Rooney knows that his grownup son is infantile and savage and that he can't control him—courses back and forth between rage and sorrow but finally gets projected into the air, without response. On the road, the Sullivans—the harsh father and the brave son—are held together by shame. The boy thinks his curiosity led to the whole mess; the father doesn't want his son to turn out like him. But hard-plug types, by definition, cannot say much; Sullivan feels more than he can articulate, and Hanks, letting out his misery in small movements of his eyes and mouth, tries hard to be touching. Emotionally, "Perdition" is half impacted—only the sinful old Rooney lets loose and says what he really feels (and one becomes grateful for Newman's bravura).

The movie's best moments are the eerie pauses just before violence explodes—at a roadside diner, for instance, when Hanks gradually realizes that the odd-looking photographer sitting near him is a fellow-specialist in the art of murder. The violence is superbly done, except when Mendes gives way to a tendency to lyricize it. On a rainy nighttime street, as the soundtrack goes silent (except for the music), a machine gun's rat-a-tat registers as just a flashing light in the distance. The victims shoot back without moving; the scene is frozen in time. It could be the climactic moment in a ballet—there's even an audience, watching without a word from the windows. This kind of visual exercise is very pretty, but it's also an elaborate form of showing off. In his great essay "Style and Medium in the Motion Pictures," the art historian Erwin Panofsky wrote of art in the movies that "to pre-stylize reality prior to tackling it amounts to dodging the problem. The problem is to manipulate and shoot unstylized reality in such a way that the result has style." That's what Arthur Penn did in "Bonnie and Clyde" and what Curtis Hanson did in "L.A. Confidential." For all the beauty and power of "Road to Perdition," there's not much spontaneity in it, and the movie's flawless surface puts a stranglehold on meaning. But this may make the movie easier to take: people who don't like violence in movies will find the picture so elegantly distanced that all the mayhem won't disturb them one little bit.

A half-deaf but observant secretary (Emmanuelle Devos), who reads people's lips and attitudes and feels like a loser, and a mangy ex-con with a blank look in his eyes and an endless capacity for trouble (Vincent Cassel) make a very odd couple in "Read My Lips" ("Sur Mes Lèvres"). But the writer-director, Jacques Audiard, working close to his actors with a camera devoted to glances, reactions, and tiny gestures, gets us to believe that these two lost cases are destined for each other. The woman, after all, requires some waking up, a little danger or excitement, if she is not to expire from boredom and depression; and the man needs some sense talked into him if he is not to fall back into prison. They form an alliance and renew themselves by ripping off unsavory people. The movie turns into a serious and rather audacious study in the sexiness of a nonsexual relationship, though by the end the audience may be rooting for the two to quit risking life and limb and just go to bed together. ♦

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7. The wisest use of F.B.I. resources would be to:
___ Conduct surveillance of other security agencies.
___ Fix the fax machine.
___ Bug the community of Langley, Va.

8. Any F.B.I. agent who drives a foreign import should be
________________________.

9. Accepting money for the deliberate defacement of or provision of misleading information in a document of a domestic U.S. security agency is only to be expected from:
___ Al Qaeda ___ The Rosicrucians ___ The C.I.A.
___ Ivy League snobs ___ Tweedy alcoholics

10. You are under arrest for impersonating an F.B.I. agent. Or are we mistaken?

C.I.A.

We already have this information.

1. Define the following:
"Boola Boola" ____________
Turnbull & Asser ____________
Wykehamist ____________

2. You are investigating a terrorist plot in the Hindu Kush. An F.B.I. agent arrives to "lend a hand." You:
(a) Give him/her some comic books.
(b) Tie his/her shoelaces together.
(c) Tell dirty J. Edgar Hoover jokes until he/she storms off in a huff.

3. Word-association test (check preference)
___ Clodhopper / F.B.I. / cheeseburgers
___ Dipstick / hairball / the Bureau
___ Podunk / Men in Black / Deputy Dawg

4. What F.B.I. project was the biggest flop? ____________

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:
Dumb ___ Lying ___ K.G.B. plant ___ Other ___

5. WRITE "YOU DON'T" IN (5) OPPOSITE.

6. You are paired with an F.B.I. agent on a top-priority op. You:
(a) Lock the passenger door of your car so he/she can't get in.
(b) Get him/her drunk and tape-record his/her loose talk.
(c) I.D. him/her to the Mafia.

7. Fill in the blanks:
The F.B.I agent ________ the case, then ________ the coverup because he/she was too ________ to know better, forcing the C.I.A. to come in and ________ his/her ________. The F.B.I. then had the nerve to ________.

8. Answer RIGHT or WRONG:
Defacing the employment application of a domestic U.S. security agency, or providing false information therein, can earn a $50 cash bonus. ________
Send my bonus to: ____________

9. I am:
(a) Skull & Bones.
(b) Hasty Pudding.
(c) Schoolmate of the director.
(d) Security risk.
(e) All four.

10. Welcome to the Agency, old chum!

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